

Twenty Two

SERMONS,

P R E A C H E D

Partly before His

M A J E S T Y

A T

W H I T E - H A L L,

And partly at the

CHAPPEL at S. *JAMES'S*.

By *HENRY KILLIGREW, D.D.*

L O N D O N,

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1 JOHN iii. 5.

*And ye know that he was manifested
to take away our sin, and in him
is no sin.*



THE main Drift and Scope of Saint *John*, throughout this whole Epistle, is to perswade the Christians to whom he writes, *Not to sin*; *These things*, says he in the former Chapter, *I write unto ye, that ye sin not*. For such Christians it seems there were then, as well as now, who believed that the Faith and a wicked Life were not inconsistent together; that men might profess the Gospel, and not forsake their Vices. They acknow-

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ledged *Christ* to be the promised *Messiah* and Saviour that was to come into the World, but they understood not rightly wherein Salvation consisted, *viz.* that 'twas not only in the remission of sins, but in the reclaiming men from the commission of them; not only in taking away their guilt, but in reforming their evil lives. The Apostle therefore, to set them right in a matter of so high concernment, alledges in the foregoing Chapter many Reasons against their indulging themselves in any vicious course: As the contrariety of sin to God, *who is all Light, and to walk in sin, is to walk in darkness*: the unsuteableness of such ways to the glorious Promises they expected; the vileness of earthly things, in comparison of things heavenly, and the like. And in the Words of my Text he adds two Reasons more, taken from two things, which he says they did know, but did not duly consider. The first from the purpose of the manifestation of *Christ* in the Flesh, which was *to take away sin*. And the second from the Sanctity of his Life, (which was an even course of righteousness) *Christ* purposing to take away Sin by his Example, as well as by his Death and Sufferings. *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin.*

We may observe in the Words these three things:

I. The Purpose of the manifestation of *Christ* in the Flesh, *It was to take away sin.*

II. The Purpose of his holy Life, That was also *to take away sin*: For St *John* alledges this for a Motive, as well as his manifestation in the Flesh, That *in him was no sin.*

III. The Inference from these two Purposes, imply'd in the Argumentation of the Apostle, though not express'd in his Words, That it is the Duty of all *Christ's*

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Christ's Followers, as far as 'tis possible for frail men, to be without sin.

I begin with the *Purpose* of *Christ's* Manifestation in the *Flesh*, To take away sin. And first a few things

Of his *Manifestation*.

Christ's coming into the World is express'd in Scripture by this Term of *Manifestation*, to shew that 'twas of a different kind from other mens, who had no Being before their productions into the World, unless in a very imperfect way of conceiving it, viz. in their Causes and Principles. But *Christ* before he was born into the World, had a full and perfect Existence, even from all Eternity, and did only assume our Nature to his Pre-existent Being, thereby to enable him to perform the Work of our Salvation, and more familiarly to converse with Mankind: as our Apostle says, *that we might see, and hear, and handle the Word of Life*. And 'twas in reference to his Being before he was born of the Virgin, that Old *Zachary* compares his Manifestation in the *Flesh*, to the rising of the Sun above the Horizon, *Whereby the Day-spring*, says he, *from on high hath visited us*. The Sun's Rising, we know is not his first Being, as some ignorant People of old conceived, who thought he was extinguish'd every Night in the Sea, and a new one lighted every Morning: But the Sun, before he comes forth to us as a *Bridegroom* out of his Chamber, has run his Course to many People and Nations. So likewise *Christ*, the Sun of righteousness, before he shone to us here on Earth, had run the Course of Eternity, as I may say, with his Father, being the power of God from all Ages, the Image of his Goodness, and the brightness of his Person. And this, by

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the way, may arme us against the errour and seduction of the *Ebionites*, *Samosatenians*, reviv'd again by the *Socinians* in later days : who teach, That *Christ* had no Being before he was conceived by the Virgin, of the Holy Ghost, *Christus non fuit ante Mariam Virginem* ; *Mary* the Virgin, say they, and *Christ* the Saviour, were Cotemporaries. Thus these Hereticks, while they feared to worship a Man, denyed the Son of God ; and ran into the highest Infidelity and Sacrilege, to avoid only a supposed Idolatry. But to proceed.

The *Manifestation* of *Christ* unto the World in our Nature, the Appearance of the Son of God in the Flesh, to speak strictly, was rather an *Obscuration* than a *Manifestation* of him. As the interposition of a Cloud between the sight of our Eyes and the Sun, is a veiling, and not a shewing of him ; so the exhibiting of *Christ* in the beggarly Rags of our Flesh and Blood, was a disguising, not a revealing of him. That God (who is incomprehensible and unconceivable, hid from our senses, and hid from our understandings, not by Darkness, but by excess of Light and Glory, and our incapacity to behold him) would stoop to manifest himself to mortal eyes, though in the most excellent created Form whatsoever, was an infinite diminution of his Majesty : But to manifest himself not only *to*, but *in* our Nature, must be confessed to be the greatest Clouding and Absconding, and not Revelation, of the Deity imaginable ; and such as could never have entred into the thoughts of Man to believe, if it had not been done and seen. But however that this is most true : yet if we consider this *Mystery* rightly (for though the *Evangelists* set down the Manifestation of *Christ* in the Flesh *Historically*, *S^t Paul* speaks of it as of a high *Mystery*) we shall

shall find, that God could no way have more eminently declared his Wisdom, and consulted the infirmity of Men, in the manifesting of his Son to the World, than after that mean manner which he did ; that such his eclipsing and obscuring him, was the most advantageous and effectual way of revealing him.

For in the first Place, how was it possible for mortal eyes to have seen the Immortal God otherwise ? Alas ! we cannot behold the Sun, but in his setting, as one says, *Spectantes oculos infirmo lumine passus*, our weak Eyes are not able to gaze on that glorious Luminary in its Meridian strength ; but if we will see its Beauty, we must watch the opportunity of its infirmity : For otherwise the greater its lustre is, the greater is our darkness to perceive it. How then could we have beheld the Glory of *Christ* ? the ineffable Glory, I say, which he had with his Father from all Eternity ? His three Disciples were as dead men, beholding only his Transfiguration ! and those that apprehended him in the Garden, upon the streaming-forth only of some Rays of his Divinity through the Cloud of his Flesh, fell twice to the Ground : who could then have stood or supported the Fulguration, as I may say, of his Deity in its full Glory ? It was not possible for *Christ* to have appeared, but in some exinanition, or being stript of his Majesty ; the Son of God to have convers'd with Mankind, but in the Clothing of Humanity.

2. If we consider the Purpose of his Manifestation, which was to *take away sin* ; it was not possible again to have effected this by any other Manifestation, but such as was also an Obscuration of him. For how could he have been subject to the Law in his Divine Nature ? delivered up into the hands of wicked men, suffered

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suffered Death, and the like? How could he have fulfilled the Types that shadow'd him in the Law, the Paschal Lamb, the Goat for the Sin-Offering, the Ram caught by the Horns in the Bush, &c. unless he had been hamper'd, as I may say, and caught in our Flesh, intangled in our infirmities, *found*, as St. Paul says, *in the similitude of a man*? There had been no Sacrifice, no Propitiation for Sin, if *Christ* had not come in the Flesh; no Redemption, no Salvation of the World, if the God of the World had not vouchsafed to have been born of a Woman. Yes, some perhaps will say, God of his free Grace might have pardoned mens sins, without the Incarnation of his Son, or any Sacrifice or Atonement for them. What belongs to this will fall-in in the next Place, the handling the *Purpose* of the Manifestation of *Christ* in the Flesh, which was

To take away our Sins.

It is no Wisdom barely to understand things; but this is Wisdom, To understand the *Purpose* of things. Generally the greatest Naturalists among us admire the World, this stupendous Workmanship of the Almighty and Eternal Agent, and think they have studied and observed fairly, if they have arrived to the Knowledge of the Qualities and Properties of some particular Natural Bodies; but rarely do they deduce them from their first Original, the Creator, and rarer discern the chief End for which they were created; they see a continual corruption and generation of Sublunary Beings, and that by this means the succession of the Universe is maintained: but pierce not so deep as to see that this is done, not so much for the continuance of the World, as for the continuance
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of God's Glory in the World ; and that many Ages may see, and acknowledge his Power, and partake of his Bounty and Goodness. And so it is with many Believers under the Gospel ; they read what's written of *Christ*, they magnifie his Miracles, admire his holy Life and Doctrine, commemorate his Sufferings, celebrate his Festivals ; But ~~that~~ *that* was the main *Design* of these things, what ~~they~~ *they* were to bring to pass in the World, they reflect not on as they ought to do : but stand in need to be put in mind of it, as the first Christians our Apostle here wrote to. All men are ready to assent to this Saying of St. Paul, *Great is the mystery — God was manifest in the Flesh, justify'd in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached to the Gentiles, &c.* But then that all these Mysteries are *Mysteries of Godliness, i. e.* such as should produce Godliness, Vertue and Piety in all those to whom they are preached and revealed ; make them renounce their wicked ways, and fulfil the Law of righteousness ; this they neither penetrate into, nor care to be convinc'd of. We cannot be therefore too solicitous and assiduous in making known the End, and awakening men to the consideration of *the Design and Purpose* of the Transactions of their Salvation, as necessary to be understood as the Transactions themselves : As our Apostle does not only teach, That *Christ was manifested in the Flesh*, but adds also the Reason of it, that 'twas *to take away our sins*. And this being his chief design in my Text, I shall endeavour to explain, How *Christ*, assuming our Flesh, did take away our sins. For the contrary may be imagined, that by taking our Flesh, he should have taken likewise our sins, but not have *taken them away*. But *Christ* by his Incarnation took away our sins two ways. He took them away [*From us*] And took them

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them away out of us, or [*From within us.*]

First, He took away our sins *from us.*] And this he did by taking them upon himself, and paying to God the forfeiture for them, undergoing the punishment of their guilt in our behalf, so that they were no longer our sins, but his own; the Original sin of *Adam*, after this manner, and all the Actual sins since of the whole World, he made his own. To speak strictly indeed, the Guilt of sin can never be taken away; for sin after 'tis once committed, remains for ever sinful: but in a Legal and Political sence Sin may be said to be taken away from us, when the Guilt of it is transferr'd, and the Punishment undergone by another; and the Word in the Original for [*taking away*] our Sins is *ἀραι*, which signifies [*the lifting them up*] and is in importance the same with St. Peter's expression [*be bare*] or as the Margent of our Bible has it [*be bare away*] *our sins in his Body on the Tree.* What our Lord said of his Exaltation on the Cross, *When I am lifted up from the Earth, I will draw all men unto me*; may be affirmed of their Sins, as well as of themselves; of the Guilt, as well as of the Persons of them that believe in him, *viz.* that by his lifting up on the Cross, the Sins of all men should be taken up from them, as Exhalations are drawn up from the Earth by the heat of the Sun, and after dispers'd into Air.

But now if we consider seriously this great and wonderful Dispensation of God's, *in manifesting his Son in the Flesh to take away the Sins of the World*, we must certainly conceive that he had a further and more excellent aim and end in it, than merely to pardon the Guilt of Sin, and to cancel past Transgressions. For if this had been all, as 'twas objected, this might have been done freely, and with less
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ado, without Sacrifice or Atonement for Sin ; without God's sending his Son from Heaven to live so many Years upon Earth in a poor and persecuted Condition, and at last to suffer a painful and ignominious Death : Besides, in all reason, the Pardon of Sin would have been pronounced more authoritatively and satisfactorily by God in his Glory, than in the Disguise of Humane Nature ; as the Great Lord of Heaven and Earth, than as a poor Delinquent standing himself before the Tribunal of Justice. Again, what had all the other Mutations in the Church of the Jews, the removing of the Law of *Moses*, and the introducing a more perfect, that of the Gospel, to do with the bare Remission of Sin ? the giving so many excellent Precepts, and *Christ* himself for an Example of a holy Life ; the clear discovery of a Heaven for the Reward of Well-doers, and of a Hell for evil ; the confirming these things with so many Miracles, and the Blood of so many Divine Persons ; the instituting an Order of men to preach and inculcate these things to the end of the World ? If, I say, the absolving men from their past Transgressions had been all the business, and nothing had been aimed at further, or required of them to qualify them to receive this Grace, but barely to believe that such a Grace was offered them (as too many flatter and delude themselves) all these operose, toilsome, mysterious and astonishing Performances of *Christ and the Holy Ghost* might have been spar'd, and any one of the least of the Sons of the Prophets would have serv'd to have proclaim'd the Remission of Sins, and coming on this Errand, would have found credence and welcome. But, alas, the Case was otherwise : Men were not only to be pardoned, but reformed ; to be absolved from their Guilt : but, as 'tis in the *Benedict*, be-

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ing delivered out of the hands of their Enemies, they were to serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their life.

That men therefore may not mistake the principal Design for which Christ came into the World, our Apostle plainly declares it at the 8th Verse. *For this purpose*, says he, *the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.* Christ came not only to pardon Sin, but to destroy it; not only to absolve a wicked World, but to make a righteous; to take away the condemnation, but the commission of Sin: And therefore the second way I named of *Christ's* taking away our Sins [*From within us*] ought to be taken into our highest consideration. For can it be imagined, that he should descend from the Bosom of his Father, and visit the Earth for no other end, but to make a Gaol-Delivery, as I may say, to reprieve so many Rake-Hells only and condemn'd Persons, and to turn them loose again into the World to commit more villanies? The whole Tenor of the Gospel speaks otherwise, that *Christ* was born in the Flesh, that we might be regenerate and new-born of the Spirit; that he was crucified, that we might crucifie our vile Lusts and Affections: dyed for the Guilt of Sin, that we might dye to the Practice of it; suffer'd, to excuse us from suffering, but not to excuse us in any wickedness: he cast out the Hand-writing, or Accusation of Satan against us, to no other end but that we should cast out Satan himself and his Kingdom out of our hearts, and erect in the place God's Kingdom, or the Kingdom of righteousness. So that the *manifestation of Christ in the Flesh to take away our sins*, imports no less than his rectifying that ugly confusion and disorder which Sin had wrought in the Universe, and the de-
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posing Satan from his Usurpation over the World; than the restoring God to his Dominion, and his Creatures to his Obedience; the repairing his Honour, and giving satisfaction, not to one Attribute only, his Justice, but to all his other Attributes, his Wisdom, Truth, Goodness, Holiness, &c. And this was a Design worthy of the Incarnation of the Deity, of the travel, sufferings, and all the other Glorious Works of the *Messiah*, of his unhinging and unframing the Course of Nature by his Miracles: for it was to no less end, than to re-establish it again in the beautiful Frame and Order, which God at first created it in, before the Devil had disfigured and deformed it.

And for this Cause the *Evangelists*, in relating the Passages of *Christ's* life, often take us off from looking too intently on the *Events* which they record, and call upon us to consider the *Purposes* of them, rather than the *Events* themselves, bidding us regard the Prophecies that went before of them, frequently repeating, *that it might be fulfilled, that it might be fulfilled, that was spoken by such or such a Prophet*. And if we will make the best advantage of *Christ's* Incarnation, we must not look so much on the *Fact*, as on the *design of the Fact*, what it intimates and preaches to us, *viz.* the extinction and extirpation of Sin, not only of the Guilt, but of the reigning Power of it. According to what St Peter says, *As he has suffered for us in the Flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind: for he that has suffered in the Flesh hath ceased from Sin*. This arming our selves with the same mind, and ceasing from Sin in the Flesh, was that which God chiefly aimed at in his Manifestation of his Son in the Flesh; To the end, as the Apostle goes on, *that we should no longer live the rest of our time in the Flesh, to the lusts of men,*

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but to the will of God. And to shew us yet further, that the bringing of men to live righteously was the great aim of God in all Ages of the World, says St. Peter, *For this cause was the Gospel preached also to those that are dead,* [i. e. to those of the old World] *that they might live according to God in the Spirit.* Let every Christian therefore (that professes the Faith of Christ's coming in the Flesh to take away Sin, and yet lives in it) hearken and attend to this Admonition, [*Remember thy End.*] In the Place where the Son of Syrach utters these Words, he means the End or Consummation of our Days, as we are natural men, which is good Wisdom: But *remember thy end,* i. e. the Design and Purpose of thy Christian Profession, and the Mysteries of it: for this is yet a higher degree of Wisdom. And before I yet leave this Point, I shall give caution against two sorts of Men, who greatly pervert this Advice:

And first, Against the *Papists*, who play and trifle with the weightiest Passages of our Salvation, as Poets and Romance-Writers do with serious Histories, turn them into Gauds and Entertainments of the Fancy; make Models and Representations in their Churches, of Christ's lying in the Manger at this holy Season, and of his rising from the Grave at the Feast of *Easter*, with all the circumstances belonging to them; as if such Puppet-Shews were adequate and sutable Returns of Devotion for these Divine Dispensations. Again, they gather and hoard up the Nails and Fragments of our Lord's Cross, as if they treasured to their Souls the Benefits of his Passion: hug his Crucifix, and weep over the Pictures of his Wounds, as if this express'd a *Seraphical* Affection, though they hug also at the same time the grossest Sins.

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The second Caution is against those among our selves, who yet worse abuse the Purpose of the Manifestation of Christ in the Flesh, making it to be more for the encouragement, than the taking away of Sin; fancying that he died, to excuse them from holy living; was made subject to the Law, that they might be freed from the Obedience of it; perform'd all righteousness, that they should need to perform none: and these men pray, as they believe, *O Lord, say they, do thou all in us, and for us, and take thou the glory.* Thus exempting themselves from all Obligations to the Commandments, and making the Faith a jest and scorn to Libertines and Unbelievers, while they talk only more of a holy Life than they, but practise it as little; make the Cross of *Christ* not a Sanctuary to Penitent Sinners, but a refuge for Hypocrites and Cheats in Religion; and yet none are so righteous, so much in God's favour in their own opinion as these: But they will find at last to their great confusion, That *Christ* was manifested in the Flesh, not only to take away our Sins [*From us*] but also to take them away [*Out of us, or from within us.*]

And he does this by three Means or Expedients, By *his Spirit*, by *his Word*, and by *his Example*.

First, By *his Spirit*. After the Manifestation of *Christ* in the Flesh, his Suffering, and being laid in the Grave, he was quickned (or raised to life again) by the *Spirit of God*, and exalted to have the Power and Prerogative of sending down the Spirit into the hearts of Believers, to quicken them, and to raise them from the Death of Sin to a Life of Righteousness, *i. e.* to sanctifie and enable them to master Sin in themselves. They that saw *Christ* in the Flesh, knew not at first, That the principal Intention of *his*
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Flesh, was his *Spirit*, viz. that his Incarnation was to produce their Sanctification ; to conform them to his likeness in the Inner-man, as he was conformed to their likeness in the Outward-Man : and those that are not thus conformed, that have not their Sins taken away *In them*, by Vertue of his Nativity, shall never have them taken away *From them* by Vertue and Merit of his Passion.

Secondly, By his *Word* he takes away our sin from *within us*. Now ye are clean, says our Lord, *John 15. 3. through the Word which I have spoken unto you, i. e.* you have put away your former wickedness, upon believing what I have preached. To believe and to be clean, in a Scripture sense, is the same thing : For 'tis not possible rightly to believe, and to continue in the Pollution of Sin. *The Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit.* The efficacy of it was seen in the reprobate hearts of *Herod* and *Felix* ; How did it ruffle and discompose the incestuous security of the first, and put an Earthquake into the stupid Conscience of the last ? But yet 'tis then only, to use *Solomon's* expression, that *wise Words are as Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver*, when they meet with docile ears and honest hearts ; when the disposition of the Hearers concurs with the faithful intention of the Preacher ; and they comply to destroy Sin in themselves, as he endeavours to destroy it in his Sermon. Otherwise this most powerful and effectual Engine to batter and beat down Sin, *the Word preached*, profits not, as 'tis in the Chapter now mentioned in the Hebrews, *But the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixt with Faith in them that heard it.*

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Thirdly, *Christ* takes away Sin from *within us* by his *Example*, i.e. by his holy Life, as well as by his Word and by his Spirit : his Meekness, Holiness, Self-denial, Obedience, &c. were designed by him to excite his Followers to practise the same Vertues equally or above his Precepts. And though we condemn the Errour of those who affirm, *That the Pattern of Christ's life, the perfect Exemplar of Piety and Holiness which he exhibited to the World, was the only means, besides his Word, which he used to take away our Sins* : We may yet more condemn the sloth and hypocrisie of those, who set his Life above our Imitation ; who put his Vertues into the same Classis with his Miracles, and think it as impossible for us to practise his Humility, Patience, and the like, as to open the Eyes of the Blind, or to raise the dead ; affirm that his Obedience and Righteousness were not set for our Example, to direct and encourage us to do the like, but to upbraid and reproach our weakness and infirmities. In the mean time our Lord himself, *Joh. 17. 19.* declares, *That the holiness he practised, was not only for the love of holiness, but that his Disciples should follow him, even in the roughest Paths he trod, those of his Suffering, to which his Words more particularly relate.* For their sakes, says he, *I sanctifie my self* [or offer up my self a Sacrifice] *that they also might be sanctified through the Truth.* And *S^t Peter* says expressly, *Christ suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that we should follow his steps.* And this brings me to the second Motive the Apostle alledges to dissuade men from Sin, *the sanctity and sinlesness of Christ's Person,* — *and ye know that in him is no sin.* But because this in a great part has fallen-in with the former Motive, and to accumulate Reasons of the same Nature rather nauseates than perswades, I shall wave this

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this Point, and proceed to my last, The Inference which the Argumentation of the Apostle implies from the foregoing Motives, *viz.* That 'tis the Duty of all *Christ's* Followers to endeavour, as far as 'tis possible, to be also without sin, and which shall serve me also for an Application.

The Son of God, we have heard, *was manifested in the Flesh to take away our sins, and in him is no sin.* Now certainly we cannot think that we comply either with the Example of Righteousness which he has set us, or yet with the gracious Purpose that brought him into the World, if we reflect on his Nativity only after an Historical manner, as that he was born in such an Olympiad, or when such an one was Emperour; that such rare Events attended his coming into the World, as are recorded by the *Evangelists*, namely, that he was conceived by a Virgin of the Holy Ghost, welcom'd by Angels, signaliz'd and reveal'd to the Gentiles by a Star, &c. as if we were Chronologers, rather than Christian Believers: But that principally we are to consider these things Doctrinally and Morally, to regard the Obligations they lay upon us, and the final intendment of God in them. For Example, to say to our selves, If God came so far as from the highest Heavens to take our Flesh, that he might destroy sin, how much more are we concerned to destroy sin, in whom it dwells, whose Flesh is its Domestick Organ, and which will certainly destroy us both Body and Soul, unless we destroy it? Again, if God vouchsafe so highly to dignifie our Flesh, as to assume it to his Divine Nature, and to carry it up to Heaven with him, and that by way of Pledge and assurance to carry up all that live holy lives thither also; how ought we to respect and even to revere these our mortal Bodies, and not
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to pollute them with sin, which are designed to such sublime Honour, as to reign with God in Glory? Once more, If the Son of God came into the World, not only to teach us his Father's Will, but to demonstrate to us, by his own performance, the feasibility of accomplishing it; and did not only discourse of the probability of mortal mens ascending to Heaven, but gave an instance of it in our Flesh: how are we without excuse, if either upon pretence of the difficulty of the Duties enjoined, or the arduous ascent to the heavenly Kingdom promised us, we supersede our endeavours to attain it? When the *Israelites* were travelling to the Land of *Canaan*, they said to *Aaron*, *Make us Gods that may go before us, i. e.* visible Gods that we may behold: they were not satisfied with the conduct of an invisible Deity, of a God that afforded not his personal presence. *Christ manifested in the Flesh* is such a visible palpable God as they required, who marches as a Captain at the Head of us, and guides us not only by his Counsel, but leads us by his Bodily Presence. But yet notwithstanding this compliance with our infirmities, and all the other endeavours that have been used for our Salvation; though *Christ* by his *Spirit*, by his *Word*, and by his *Example*, has essayed to take away our sins *From us*, and to take them away *In us*: I know not how, they are not taken away from [*Among us*!'] Our Sins, like Idolatry in *Israel*, like the Groves and High-Places, are continually taking away, and still found remaining; they vary and change according to the several Revolutions and Vicissitudes of our Condition, but they are not abolished; when Rebellion reigned in the Land, Rapine, Oppression, Bloodshed, Sacrilege, were its complexion: When this Evil by a singular Mercy was remov'd from us, the Sins of

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Peace

Peace succeeded, Ingratitude for past, and Insensibleness of present Benefits, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Irreligion, Schism, Faction, &c. So that as the *Romans* complained of old, that after they had subdued the Nations, themselves were subdued by their own Vices; that these sly and silent Enemies, Luxury, Covetousness and Ambition, revenged and retaliated the conquered World — *vicumque ulciscitur Orbem*: We may in like manner complain, that after the Violences and Outrages of War ceased, the soft and soothing Sins of Peace crept in in their place, and have tyrannized over us more fatally and destructively. And who then can say, our Sins are taken away, when they are only transformed, and have assumed new Shapes and Names? when that which was Rebellion in 41. is Dissoluteness or Atheism in the Year 70?

But though there be too much reason to bewail this: yet I hope, (with the same Charity that I wish the thing) that none that are guilty of the more enormous Sins I have mentioned, are present in this Assembly: but that it fares with my Complaint, as it does with the Exhortations which are made out of the Pulpit to Non-Conformists, those to whom the Speech is directed, are never there. So in my present Complaint (of not forsaking our Sins, but exchanging them for others) I do but inculcate a Doctrine to the Gracious already, and that those that are otherwise, are not here. But if any chance to be, I shall only mind them of those Words they find, *Psal. 10. 17. Take away his ungodliness, and thou shalt find none.* If after God has endeavoured so many ways to take away their ungodliness, it shall still remain, they are more incorrigible than the worst of men; and their obstinacy may well fear, not only
what

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what the Words in the Psalm sound, but what they signifie, viz. that God will not only confound their wickedness, but themselves also the wicked Doers. Christ was manifested in the Flesh to destroy Sin, and we ought in compliance with this his gracious Design to put to all our Powers to destroy Sin in our selves; that purifying our selves as he is pure, we may hereafter be glorious, even as he is glorious.

*To the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be ascribed
all Honour, &c.*

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The Second Sermon.

1 SAM. xii. 25.

But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King.



THE State and Commonwealth of *Israel* differed from all other States in the World; it was neither *Aristocracy*, nor yet *Democracy*; but, if rightly denominated, a *Theocracy* or Divine Monarchy: *i. e.* it was in subjection to no Man, or Number of Men, but immediately to God himself. Ye have said, *Nay, but a King shall reign over us, when the Lord your God was your King, v. 12.* Again,
C. 10.

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C. 10. 19. *Ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities.* God was the Commander, Prince and Monarch of this State in his own Person.

But being a Spiritual King, as well as a Temporal ; and exercising a Dominion over the Souls, as well as Bodies of his Subjects : though his Reign were as the Reign of Prosperity it self ; his Scepter, not only a Scepter of righteousness, but of felicity ; Plenty, Victory, and all other Blessings attending it ; they were impatient of it, as of an intolerable and insupportable Yoke ; chose rather to be governed as the Nations of the Earth, than even as the Angels in Heaven ; by a mortal, than a Celestial King ; preferred an improsperous Condition, together with a greater liberty of sinning, before the most prosperous, with a strict obligation to righteousness ; held it, I say, more eligible even to see their Enemies within their Gates, than their God with narrow eyes continually prying into their actions.

God, who saw this perverseness of their hearts in demanding a King, punished their folly by complying with it ; defeated their wickedness by granting their request. *Ye shall, says God, for the future be governed as you desire ; after the manner of the Nations, ye shall have a King ; the Court and the Sanctuary, the Palace and the Tabernacle shall be separated ; my Divine Authority shall no more interpose in your making War or Peace, in your marching or encamping, in your Civil or Military Affairs ; all shall be in the power of your King : But promise not your selves from hence a greater licence to sin, for though I shall withdraw my former manner of Conduct from you, I will have as near an inspection into your Actions as I had before ; and though my miraculous assistances are more rarely shewed,*

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shewed, I will visit your iniquity with Scourges. Your King and new-modell'd State shall be so far from protecting you in your disobedience, that they shall render your destruction only more signal and calamitous. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed both ye and your King.

In the Days in which God chiefly invited his People to Obedience by the Promises of temporal Blessings, and deterred them from Disobedience by the threats of temporal Evils, none were greater than those that related to their King. As whether he were a Child, or of grown Years; a base Upstart, or the Son of Nobles; one that eat in the morning, or at due season; for strength or for drunkenness, as Solomon speaks: Or as the Prophet Isaiah, *A wise and gracious Prince, or a fierce and cruel Lord and a Fool.* Again, whether the Reign of a wicked King were prolonged, or of a righteous cut short; whether the Prince were often changed, or many set up at the same time, as those Words may be interpreted either way, *For the transgressions of a Land many are the Princes thereof.* I say, no higher Marks of God's favour, or disfavour to a People, could be shewed, than in what related to their King. And no wonder: For undoubtedly a good King is infinitely above the encrease of the Barn and the Wine-press, of the Flocks and the Herds: for he is the security of all these, and whatever else makes a Kingdom happy and blessed. Plenty is not Plenty, Possessions are not Possessions, Peace is not Peace, Religion is not Religion, without such a Guardian and Conserver of them.

Well therefore might God, as being the highest of Judgments, threaten his rebellious People with the *destruction of their King.* I say, his rebellious People; for the King is not threatned in my Text, but the People,

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People, of whom he was King. For though a wicked King shall certainly bear the burden of his Sins ; and though the Judgment here denounced by *Samuel* was after a King was anointed in *Israel* : yet 'twas denounced against the Sin of the People committed before there was a King : Neither had *Saul* as yet displeased God, he affected not the Kingdom, though *Israel* affected to have a King. They are the *Israelites* therefore that are threatned in the Person and misfortune of their King, whom God declares he will involve in their destruction, even when he is not involved in their sins ; and a good King is sooner cut off for the provocation of a Land, than a bad ; but then though he falls, 'tis the Land that is punished ; though he be untimely snatcht away, 'tis the Nation that is judged and condemned. *But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King.*

The Words consist of a Commination or Threat, *Ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King.*

And the Case wherein the Commination or Threat shall take place, *If ye shall still do wickedly—*

I begin with the Commination or Threat,

Ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King.

The Commination runs high, a greater cannot well be denounced ; 'tis only to be fear'd it may suffer the fate of the vain menaces and Rhodomantadoes of men ; which are most despised when they sound loudest, and affect to carry most terrour. *Ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King !*] Why certainly, men will say, This is some Figurative Hyperbolic Speech, which carries not so much danger in it to be feared, as difficulty to be understood ; and sends

sends us to an Interpreter, and not an *Asylum* or Sanctuary. Was it ever known, that a whole Nation was destroyed as one man? *Dathan* and his Complices, 'tis true, went down into the Bowels of the Earth, and it clos'd its mouth upon them: but they were not a whole Nation, but a seditious Party only. *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* were overwhelmed in the Sea, and not one of them escaped; but they again were not a King and his People, but a King and his Host. The seven Nations of the *Canaanites* were adjudged to utter extirpation: but by reason of the Sins of God's own People, the Sentence was not executed with that rigour it was denounced, and they were not utterly destroyed. Let us see therefore how we are to understand the Commination in my Text, *How a King and People may be said to be totally consumed.*

A thing may be totally consumed or destroyed two ways, *simul & semel*, altogether and in a moment; as Fire consumes Flax or Gunpowder, so that nothing remains but the Place of them: Or gradually and by degrees, when 'tis wasted by little and little, as Liquor consumes over the Fire, or as a Body is extenuated by Sickness. Now though God perhaps through the greatness of his Mercy, has never consumed a whole Nation in the fullest and strictest sense of either of these two Ways; yet so dreadful have been his Judgments, and so universal the Destruction he has wrought, that there will be no cause to say, There is an *Hyperbole* in the Commination in my Text.

The first way God practised, when he caused the ten Tribes and their King to be carried away captive by *Shalmanezzer* into *Assyria* with a swift destruction: and the other two Tribes and their King by *Nebuchadnezzar* into *Babylon*. This way also God practised, when he gave this Nation up to the Conquest of

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the *Normans*: Or as the Tragedy on this Day should rather prompt us to remember, when he permitted the Blood of our righteous Sovereign, after the slaughter of many thousands of his Loyal Subjects, to be spilled by the hands of execrable Villains, and together with that sacred Sluce broke-up all the Flood-Gates of Impiety, and suffered it to overwhelm the Land with wickedness and ruine, as the World was once overwhelmed with a Deluge of Water. At which time, we may affirm, Death, or a change like Death, past upon all; the Rich became poor, and the Poor rich; the Nobles were debased, and the Scum of the People exalted; the Loyal were accounted Traytors, and Traytors Loyal; Oppression and Cruelty sat in the Seats of Justice; Hypocrisie and Blasphemy in the Chair of Religion, and an abject Villain in the Throne of Majesty. And when the Kingdom was reduced to this State, may we not say, it was destroyed *semel & semel*? altogether and at once? both King and People? and that nothing remained of what had been, but the Place and Memory? The Scripture says, *Adam* dyed on the Day he eat of the forbidden Fruit, though he survived nine hundred and thirty Years after: because he fell then into an evil condition, and forfeited all his happiness. Again, the Scripture calls Damnation Eternal Death, not because the Bodies and Souls of Sinners shall be extinguish'd, but eternally tormented; Life consisting not so much in duration, as in felicity. And in this sense, when a Kingdom has lost its Felicity and Glory, its Laws and Liberty, its King and Religion, though a Remnant of the People be left, it may deservedly be said, To be totally and utterly destroyed.

God practised the second way of destroying a whole Nation, when he consumed the Israelites in the

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the Wilderness by such slow and lingering paces, that a new Generation was grown up by the time that the old was expired ; and the Children were ready to enter into the Land of *Canaan*, as soon as their Fathers Graves were made in the Wilderness. God thus punishing them after the manner they had transgressed ; as they had grieved him forty Years, he consumed them for forty Years together. And when ever a Nation is seen to decline in Piety, Vertue, Policy, Wealth, Reputation, the Number of its People, and the like ; when private interest takes place in mens hearts before the Publick ; when Trade, Vigour, and Industry languish, then this lingering Curse works and ferments.

I may seem both ill-affected, and also to intrude into a Secret that cannot be known, if I should pronounce, that this Kingdom lay at this present under this slow and lingering destruction, as it has been more than once a miserable Instance of the other quick and total destruction : But it may become me, and all that hear me this day, to fear and endeavour to prevent so dreadful a Judgment ; especially when so many and sad Symptoms of it seem to appear. For, not to name our Consumptions of late Years by War, by Pestilence and by Fire, we see the Moral and Spiritual Consumptions of Piety and Vertue, and as fearful an encrease of Riot, Prophaneness and Irreligion ; *Poper*y gains upon the true Religion on one side, and *Fanaticism* on the other ; and *Atheism*, the *Vorago* of all other Sects and Schisms, daily swallows up *Poper*y and *Fanaticism*. Again, we hear plentiful Years complain'd of, that the People are impoverished by the great encrease of the Land ; Abundance cry'd out against as a worse evil than Scarcity. God thus making his Punishments a Riddle,

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while he confounds us no less by his Blessings than his Judgments : as if he would at once confute and deride the Atheism that denies his Providence, and ascribes all Events to Natural Causes ; letting men see, their Wealth cannot enrich them, their Victories advantage them, their Wisdom profit them, without his Blessing and concurrence. But that which ought most tenderly and sensibly to affect us, is the Fatality in the Royal Family, so many of those Illustrious Branches having been snatcht away of late Years in their Youth or Infancy, that we may compute our Annals by the Death of one or more of our Princes : the Royal House, Alas ! being only fruitful to the Grave. But to proceed.

As the Consumption, mentioned in my Text, may be thus twofold ; so the Persons threatned to be consumed are also twofold ; and the threatening of the last is set down by way of Aggravation of the Evil, *Ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King.* But there will not want some Sons of Belial to say here, *What Part have we in David, or Inheritance in the Son of Jesse ? that this should be held a matter of so great moment, so high an aggravation of our misery, that not only our selves shall be destroyed, but our King also ?* The Speech of the People is, *When I dye, all the World dyes with me ; not only all my thoughts perish, as the Psalmist says, but all my care and concern for my Relations also perish ; whether as of a Father for my Children, or as of an Husband for my Wife, or yet as of a Subject for my Prince.* So that to say, *Ye shall be consumed,* nay more, your Prince shall be consumed, aggravates the terrour, but as if one should threaten, *Your Limbs shall be torn on the Rack, nay further, Your Garments shall be torn also.*

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No doubt, I say, but there are too many of these *Sheba's* in our *Israel*: But yet where ingenuity and natural goodness, honour and generosity are not quite extinguished by self-love and interest, there is in many men a care of others, their near Relations, even beyond themselves, and after their Decease. And this made Lawgivers enact (for a further terrour to evil Workers) the destruction of Wives and Children for the offences of Fathers and Husbands, *ut haberent aliquid quod timerent, qui mortem non timerent*; that they that feared not Death as to their own Persons, might yet fear it reaching to those for whom they had a greater tenderness than for themselves. And we see those frequently among us, that chuse to wear their lives out in a noysom Prison, or to dye under the torture of the Press, that by these means they may preserve a poor maintenance for those they leave behind them. Why, the Relation of a Subject to his King; of a People to their Prince, is in just estimation the chiefest and highest of Relations, the principal in importance, though not the nearest in Bloud: which the men of *Israel* rightly understood, when they called *David* the light of their eyes, and preferr'd him before so many thousands of themselves. And also the People of *Rome*, when upon the Election of just *Numa* they rejoyced, as *Plutarch* says, as if they had not only obtained a new King, but a new Kingdom. Indeed the felicity of a Nation is bound up in the Person of the King, and waxes or wains according to his Vertue. Well therefore may we pray heartily and truly for our King, as the *Romans* were wont to pray flatteringly for their Tyrant-Emperours, *Demus annos meos mihi, & addas Cæsari*, Take, O *Jupiter*, from the number of my Years, and add them to the account of *Cæsar's*; esteeming the King's

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King's life a greater Blessing to us, than our own ; the destruction threatned to him more dreadful than the destruction threatned to our selves ; looking upon the Commination in my Text as the highest aggravation of Evils, Ye shall dye for your Sins, nay, your religious, your victorious, or your gracious Prince shall dye also.

But some perhaps will say here, Is it just and righteous with God to destroy a good King for the transgressions of his People ? Surely yes, and the Scripture affirms as much, *For the transgressions of a People, many are the Princes thereof :* and in the second Commandment God says, *He will visit the sins of the Father upon the Children :* and for the same reason, of any Relation upon his Correlation ; as of a Subject upon the Prince. For though the Subjects are Vassals and Homagers to the Prince, both Prince and Subjects are Vassals and Homagers to God, and may be disposed of by him, as he sees best for the ends of his Glory. But then though it be righteous in God to cut off a good Prince for the punishment of his People, because he can translate him to a better life, and turn his Crown of Gold into a Crown of Glory ; yet woe be to those Subjects, who any way contribute to their Prince's or Countries misfortune, either by their wicked Plots or wicked lives ; by their immediate Conspiracies against them, or their remoter, as I may say, of their sins against their Peace and prosperity : For if men commit great offences, and go on obstinately in them, they sin not only against their own Souls, but the Publick Safety. Which brings me to my second general Part, The Case wherein the Commination in my Text shall take place, wherein both King and People are threatned to be consumed,

If

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If ye shall still do wickedly——

The things wherein both *Israel* and their Forefathers continually did wickedly, the Scripture tells us, were Infidelity, Stubbornness, Ingratitude, Murmuring openly upon the least want or distress, against their best Governours, but covertly and secretly against God himself, Proneness to Idolatry, Incontinence, the very Sins for which the Nations were cast out before them, to which the present Generation added over and above, *the demanding a King, with the design to exclude God from ruling over them.* For we must note here, That the greatness of the present sin of *Israel* consisted not in *desiring a King simply*; in renouncing, as some would have it, the sweet Government of the *Sanhedrim*, or Council of Elders, for the Regal and more Tyrannical Power. For, not to say any thing in vindication of Monarchy (that 'tis the best of Governments, not only by the consent of the wisest men of all Ages, but by the attestation of Nature, or rather the God of Nature in all Orders and Subordinations of things both in Heaven and Earth) 'twas God's express Purpose from the beginning to establish *Israel* under a *Monarchical Government*, and *Dent. 17.* (some hundreds of Years before a King was demanded) the Laws concerning a King were set down by *Moses*.

Neither did the greatness of their Sin consist in desiring a King inordinately, precipitately, rebelliously, not attending God's time, nor consulting his Will in so important an Affair: these were Aggravations of their Sin, but not their Sin it self; which was no other than *Apostasy*, at least in purpose and determination; a resolution not only to shake off the Yoke

Yoke of God's Political Government, but also to break his Yoke of righteousness from off their Necks. And that their Sin was of no common nature, the miraculous Rain and Thunder, *v. 17.* sent to reprove them, are a sufficient Argument. But we have no need to conjecture what their Offence was, for God himself declares it to *Samuel, C. 8. v. 7.* *They have not rejected thee, says God, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.* Their desire to be governed as the Nations of the Earth, was indeed To live after the licentious manner of the Nations of the Earth; not so much to have a King like them, as to be *without God in the World like them*, as the Apostle speaks. They were weary of the Divine Conduct, uneasy under God's Discipline; his Statutes and Ordinances were a burden to them, that hated on all occurrences to address themselves to the *Ephod*, to have their last Appeal to the Deity, to see the Cloud descend upon the Tabernacle, on every miscarriage, as in the days of their Fathers. The Presence of the Living God is dreadful to Flesh and Blood in its purest and holiest state, well then might these Rebels wish him further removed from them, that were conscious to themselves not only of infirmities, but of purposed defection from him; not only of defects and failures, but of direct Apostasie.

And as the Greatness of their Sin thus consisted not in desiring a King, but in revolting in their hearts from God: so their [*Still doing wickedly*] which is so severely threatned in my Text, could not possibly be, as some interpret, *their persisting in the desire to have a King.* God had already given them a King, before the Prophet denounced the Commination in my Text; and not only so, but he had promised a Blessing upon his Reign, and also on them, in case of future obedience,

bedience, as may be seen at the 14th Verse. Their Still doing wickedly therefore, must be, *their persisting and going on to accomplish their wicked design to forsake God*; their making good their Apostasie in Act, as well as in Determination and Purpose; their giving themselves up like the Heathen to whatsoever their Lusts prompted them to; and this out of a Perswasion that they might sin more securely under the Dominion of Flesh and Bloud, than under the Dominion of God. And this was the Case in which the Universal Destruction, the Destruction of King and People, is threatned in my Text.

All Sin and Doing wickedly offends God; but Presumption in sinning, persisting and resolving to do wickedly, turns him into a *consuming Fire*; when men add wickedness to wickedness, and draw *iniquity*, as the Prophet says, *with a Cart-rope*; i. e. with a long Series or Train of evil Deeds, not interrupting or breaking them off by Repentance; but lying down to sleep in sin, and rising up to return again to it; making sin the business of their lives, and not only transgressing against God and his Laws, but renouncing them. And we find in After-ages, when the Children fell into the Apostasie, which their Fathers only consulted of at this time; when, I say, their King, instead of humbling himself upon hearing God's wrath denounced against him, *Cut the Roll, and cast it into the Fire*; and the People presumptuously told his Prophet, *As for the Words that thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto them; But we will certainly do whatsoever goeth forth of our own mouth, to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven, &c.* as it is Jerem. 44. 17. *For three iniquities, and for four, says God, I will visit my People.* By three is understood many, or very
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much, as we say, *thrice happy, and thrice honourable*, for exceeding happy and honourable. When a Nation comes up to be *thrice*, i. e. exceeding sinful, their condition is dangerous: but when it goes beyond that, and is *four times sinful*, then 'tis no marvel if God also sets no Bounds to his Anger, but says, *Nunc exurgam*, I will now arise and visit; and as they have vexed me with their transgressions, I will vex them with my Judgments; as they have cast me out of their Hearts, I will cast them out of my Sight; as they will allow me no longer to be their God, I will pluck them up by the Roots, and allow them no longer to be a People and Nation; or, which is all one, a happy People, a flourishing Nation, governed as in times past: But I will eclipse their Glory, and change their Laws, together with many thousands of them, cut off their King; and they that remain, shall be in a worse condition, as Sheep without a Shepherd, *They shall be a living and lasting Destruction.*

I am now come to the full Close and Period of my Text; and what Use or Application shall I make of that which we have heard? Shall I endeavour to set forth the Heroick Vertues of our murdered King, and shew that he fell not for his own Sins, but the Sins of his People? that the impious Act of executing a Sovereign Prince by a pretended Process of Law, was a higher Strain of Treason, than to have dispatched him with a Dagger, or an empoysoned Cup? the one being Treason only against a single Monarch, but the other against Monarchy in general. These things, I confess, may be worthy of a pious Pains, and a pious Attention: but, alas! what would they profit here, where they are already acknowledged? Or what would it profit to dilate either on the Vertues

tues or Vices of other men, when we are so apt to think on the one side, that while we only extol the Vertues of Heroick Persons, we go Half-sharers with them in their Vertues? like the Cryers in the *Olympick Games*, who fancies, while they pronounced only audibly and volubly the Victors Names and Victories, part of their Glory redounded to them. And again, on the other side, while we declame against Vice, that we are free from all imputation of Vice our selves; my Text calls us to other Considerations, not only to look back on Evils past, but forward on worse Evils to come; I say, on worse, while but on the same repeated: for if it be a sad reflection, that we have been totally destroyed, 'tis certainly a much sadder, that we may be so destroyed again; that *if we shall still do wickedly, we shall be consumed, both we and our King*. This consideration, if rightly made use of, will excite us rather to call our own Sins to remembrance, than to commemorate the Sins of other men; to arraign and condemn the evil deeds are found in our selves, than to employ our time in raking into the crimes of the Age that's past. And in order to our doing this, I shall instance in three Particulars in which this Nation seems most to tread the steps of *Israel*, and to be in danger to bring home to it self, the dreadful Commination made in my Text against them.

And first, As *Israel* desired a Change of Government, only to remove God further from them: so if we may judge of mens minds by their outward actions, of the Secrets of their hearts by their following behaviour, the passionate desire of many among us to have a King again, after the fatal stroke struck this Day, was on no better an account than *Israel's* desire to have a King. We had lain a long time

under a sad Oppression at home, or a sadder Exile abroad ; ate no Bread for many Years, but what came, in a manner, to us, like Manna, from the immediate hand of God : and the frequent Fasts, strict Devotions, and holy Lives, which could only promise a continuance of such favour from Heaven, were as insupportable as the Holiness and Obedience God required of *Israel* that he might dwell among them. And many desired a King, not so much to deliver the Nation from Oppression and Confusion, as themselves from the Pædagogy of Divine Discipline ; not so much, I say, to rescue them from the Tyranny of the Usurper, as from the Tyrannies of Religion. And such a Surfeit many took, no less of holy Duties, than of evil days, that they have endeavoured since to obliterate all memory of them both : as 'twas the practice, or at least the boast of a prophane Person, That whereas others observed the Days of their Deliverance from any great danger, with Fasting and Humiliation ; he always kept such Days with Feasting and Jollity ; and for this Reason, *To make his Soul amends for what it had suffered.* And such has been the deportment of some men since God restored them to their prosperity, that they seem to vie by their voluptuous lives with the former miseries they suffered ; to make their Souls amends for the twenty Years affliction they lay under, by a twenty Years, or a whole future Lives Debauchery. When God restored us to our forfeited Peace and Prosperity, he promised himself, he had restored a People sensible of so wonderful a mercy ; who, as he had made them to abound in all secure enjoyments, would have abounded in Good Works, and Gratitude to him : but he has found such an ἀπεσδόκῳ, as I may say, such an unexpected Issue among us, as the Prophet *Isaiah* complains

complains he did in *Israel* in his Days, *He lookt for righteousness, but behold a cry.* When God lookt for righteousness, that his Glory should have been exalted in this Land more than in any other, because he had done more for it, than for any other, behold, I know not what Cry of more than usual infidelity and wickedness ! What shall I say ? that we are fallen back again into those Sins, which brought on us the calamity of this Day ? Nay, but we have outdone all our old Sins, and all that ever went before us ; we have not only broken God's righteous Laws and Commandments, but denied he ever gave a Law to the World ; we have not only denied him by our wicked lives, but even in our words to have any Being ; and as all Ages have been guilty of Adultery, Drunkenness, and the like, 'tis the Character of this, *That it affirms such things are no sins.*

Secondly, As *Israel* put their confidence in Flesh and Blood, believed, if they could obtain a King of their own Nation, he would be invincible, possessed of all the Heroick Qualities they had read of their Judges, and as his Character was greater, so his Performances would be also greater ; and this of course, as if God had been obliged, for his own Glory, to see it should be so, though they never so little-regarded his Glory themselves. And have not we put as high a confidence in Flesh and Blood, who have lookt upon our King not only as a defence against our Enemies, but even against God himself ? not only as a Foundation of our Peace and Felicity, but of our Rebellion against Heaven ? Who have said in our hearts, We have no need of the burthensom Duties of Religion, and the severities of a holy Life, now we have a King to provide against our dangers from abroad, and to take care for our quiet at home ?

Few

Few considering, in order to the Prosperity they desire, what are the provocations of the Land, how we stand in favour or disfavour with God : But enquiring, What Alliances we have made abroad ? What Ships we are able to set out ? What Money there is in the Exchequer ? What Supplies the Parliament will give, and the like ? Is not this to provoke God to infatuate our Counsels, and to bring our Enterprizes to nought ? to involve our King in a common destruction with our selves, as he did this Day, though he were even a *Hezekiah* or a *David* ?

Thirdly, As *Israel* was mutinous and rebellious upon the least occasions against their best Governours, we come not behind them in this Sin : witness the black disloyalty of this Day. Historiographers, the publick Censurers of Mankind, brand every Nation of the Earth with some Vice more peculiar to them than others, as, to name none, one with Drunkenness, another with Robbery and Piracy, a third with ambition and desire of Sovereignty, a fourth with Whoredom, and abusing themselves with Mankind, &c. And we of this Nation, among the rest, are taxt for stubbornness, and proneness to Rebellion, noted for a People that delight in Sedition and seditious Persons, that are apt to think the most turbulent and factious, the best Patriots ; the greatest Troublers, the greatest Lovers of their Country : So that as other Princes, in regard of the sweet compliance of their Subjects, are styled *Reges Hominum*, Kings of Men, ours are styled *Reges Diabolorum*, Kings of Devils. And 'tis observable, that what was the Vice of every Nation many hundred Years ago, continues to be the same still ; Time has not altered them, nor the Preaching of the Gospel reformed them.

them. But though we of this Nation should not care to wipe off the imputation that lies upon us among men; nor yet fear the displeasure of God (who counts *Rebellion as the Sin of Witchcraft, i. e.* Disobedience to Governours a Degree of Apostasie from himself) yet the experience alone of the former Evils, which our unquiet Spirits have brought upon us, and their direct tendency to bring the like again, (*viz.* to bereave us a second time of our Royal Government, and to cast us under the subjection of the basest of the People) may well make us abhor all seditious thoughts; I say, for fear lest a second time we become not only the *most miserable*, but the *most ridiculous* and *despicable* of all People; while we give the World leave to say, that we that could not digest a miscarriage in the State, are forc'd to digest Oppression and Tyranny; that could not pass by an oversight in our Rulers, are compell'd to undergo Sequestration and Banishment, the Axe and the Halter, perhaps a Foreign Yoke.

To draw to a Conclusion. It is a common Perswasion, That Comets or Blazing Stars portend the Change of States, and the Falls of Great Men: but we have much more reason to apprehend, that the Sins of the Nation, which hang like so many Meteors over our Heads, have an Ominous and Fatal Aspect on us. The Bands of Discipline are loosned, the Majesty of our Prince is despised, God blasphemed, common Honesty baffled and affronted, Lewdness triumphs, seditious Spirits take advantage from all to foment Disorders, Good Men are agast, the Magistrate desponds, as if the Distempers were as incurable as Epidemical: And yet Good Men, as if we sat on a safe Shore, we please our selves in beholding our Neighbours Ships tost and wreckt by the
Tempests

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Tempests of War; we read unconcernedly the weekly Gazettes of Armies overthrown, Cities ras'd, Countries subdu'd and ruin'd, and never apprehend, that our fair weather may suddenly lowre and overcast into a Storm. We met at this Day with vain and elated minds to judge others, not to humble our selves; and if we lay load enough upon our Adversaries, and render them black and odious, we think our selves white as Innocence. Methinks the loud Thunder in my Text (for so the Commination in it sounds to me) should chastise these Gaieties, and not appear less terrible, because articulate, and speaks more to the Soul, than to the Ear; and this pronounces emphatically, *That the Issue of Sin persisted in, is utter ruine and confusion, and that the only way to prevent destruction, is Reformation.* Let us therefore seek to reverse God's threats, by turning from our evil ways; let us upbraid the wickedness of our Oppressors by our holy Lives; condemn the Hellish Practice of this Day, not by Invectives, but by our Loyalty and Obedience; and this will turn the dreadful Commination, *Ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King,* into the Blessing promised at ver. 14. *If ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and not rebel against his Commandments, then shall ye, and also the King that reigns over you, continue following the Lord your God,* the Blessing promised to Israel, contained in these Words, shall be made good to us. God, in an extraordinary manner, will be our God, and we shall be his People: in which is included all the Felicity that can be wish't by man. And which God of his infinite mercy grant to us, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour and Glory, &c.

The

The Third Sermon.

JOHN ii. 4.

—*Woman, What have I to do with thee? my hour is not yet come.*



OUR Saviour's turning Water into Wine at the Marriage-Feast in *Cana of Galilee*, was not only the first Miracle he wrought, but, as I may say, the first Revelation of the *Messiah* to the World: For the Wonderful Conception of him by a Virgin, the Vision of Angels declaring his Birth, the Star pointing out his Cradle, and the like, may rather be reckoned among the Prophecies, than the Revelations of him; the Types and Shadows of him in the Law, than for the Completion of them in his Person. The Meanness and Obscurity of his Education and Parentage did again so darken the Glorious Prognosticks that usher'd him into the World, that he was still the *Messiah* under a Veil, the Saviour to be given, and the Christ to come. But when he once enter'd on the Execution of his Office, and began to teach, and Work Miracles; when at this poor but holy Feast in *Cana of Galilee* he turn'd Water into
G Wine,

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Wine, and gave not only an Instance of his Benignity to his Creatures, but of his Power over the Creatures, then, as our Apostle says, He Manifested his Glory, and lay no longer under the Disguise of *Fabril Filius*, the Carpenter's Son, but prov'd himself to be *Fabricator Mundi*, the Creator of the Universe ! What we read in the Gospel hitherto, is of the *Child Jesus*, now it, first, treats of the *Lord Jesus* ; to this Period it relates his Obedience to his Parents, but now it shews the time that his Parents were to be Obedient to him. If *Mary* therefore upon the Score of her Maternal Authority affects still to exercise a Dominion over him, he checks her by the Right of his Divine Authority ; if she intimates that her Desires are to be comply'd with, he lets her know his own appointed Seasons are to be attended ; and the Submission to be paid to him, which she expected from him. *When they wanted Wine, the Mother of Jesus said unto him, They have no Wine. Jesus said unto her, Woman, What have I to do with thee ? my hour is not yet come.*

The Words offer more especially to our Consideration these two things :

I. Our Saviour's Check or Reproof of his Mother, *Woman, What have I to do with thee ?*

II. The Reason of his Checking or Reproving her, Because she importun'd him Unseasonably, *when his Hour was not yet come.*

In the Reproof we may reflect again upon two things : The Name he calls her by, *Woman* : And the Terms in which he reproves her, *What have I to do with thee ?* I begin first with the Name he calls her by,

Woman.

Woman.

That *Christ* should call the Blessed Virgin by the Name only that distinguish'd her Sex, *Woman*, and not by the Individual Name of her Person, *Mary*; nor yet by the Name of his Relation to her, *Mother*; that he should thus treat his Parent, as not his Parent, use a Compellation to her as a Stranger; was so surprizing and posing a Behaviour from him, that it has occasion'd many Different, and some Wild Imaginations in men, why he did this thing. The *Montanists* and *Valentinians* (a sort of Hereticks who taught that our Saviour took not True Flesh from the Virgin) affirm'd, That he denies her here to be his Mother, and that these Words, *Woman, what have I to do with thee?* import as much as, *Nihil tecum commune habeo, non agnosco te pro Matre*, I am not of the same Nature with you, I acknowledge you not to be my Mother: But there is no ground from our Lord's Words to say, He made his Mother a Stranger to his Nature, though he made her a Stranger to his Business. The *Jovinians*, *Helvetians*, and *Eunomians* affirm'd as extravagantly, That our Lord call'd her *Woman*, to shew, that she continu'd no longer in her *Virgin-State*, than till she brought-forth him: But what *S^t Augustine* says, is not only agreeable with the Universal Tradition of the Church, but also with Scripture it self, *Dicta est mulier, secundum Fæmininum Sexum, non secundum corruptionem Virginitatis*. Christ call'd her Woman in regard of her Sex, not of her Married Condition; as God call'd *Eve* Woman the hour he created her, before he gave her to *Adam* for a Wife. The *Papists*, on the other side, who may be call'd *Beate Virginis Parasiti*, the Parasites or Flatterers of the

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the Blessed Virgin, create to her an addition of Honour, and sing her *New Magnificats*, from her being call'd *Woman*. They say *Christ* styled her so upon the same account, that himself was styled *The Son of Man*, by way of Excellence, because she was something Above a Woman. But our Church (which has no other Interest in this matter, but the Truth; which honours the Blessed Virgin, but does not idolize her; which celebrates her Sanctity, but makes no Markets of her Shrines) speaks as the Gospel gives her light, *viz.* That *Christ*, by the Compellation of *Woman* in this place, checks and rebukes her; that his Words are a Diminution and no Accession of Glory to her. The term *Woman*, I confess, in it self carries no Reproof or Asperity: neither did our Lord use it at other times to signify his Displeasure. When he said to the Woman of *Canaan*, that besought him to heal her Daughter, *O Woman! great is thy Faith*. He call'd her not *Woman*, because he was angry with her, but because she was a Stranger, known only to him by her Faith. But then, though to call a Stranger *Woman*, has no Asperity, yet to call a Mother so, has much Asperity. We find but one time only more besides this, that our Lord took up this Compellation to the Blessed Virgin, and that was when he hung upon the Cross; a time, I confess, when he had no displeasure at all to her, but contrariwise the most tender Resentment of her desolate Condition. When he bequeath'd her to the Care of his Beloved Disciple, he said to her, *Woman, behold thy Son*. But though the Expression there imply'd no Anger, it imply'd something of the like nature with what it does in my Text: for as his calling of her *Woman* upon his entering on his Prophetick Office, import'd the Expiration of her Maternal Authority:

thority : So his calling of her *Woman* at the hour of his Death, imported the Expiration of hers, and all other humane Relations to him ; and that for the future she was to look upon him as her Saviour, not as her Son ; depend upon his Divine Providence, not his Filial Care of her.

It is not possible for a Son, with the preservation of his Duty and Reverence, to use a Term of Diminution, or but of Strangeness to a Parent, without some very important Reason to justify it. But the Case and Condition of *Christ*, as I say, was at this time much alter'd : for when the Relation of Redeemer commenc'd, Carnal Relations began to cease ; and when he was in a more evident manner declar'd to be the Son of God, his being the Son of *Mary* surceas'd and expir'd. He put this Question (concerning his Divine Nature and Humane Alliance) afterwards to the Pharisees. *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my Right hand, until I make thine Enemies thy Footstool.* Seeing *Christ* was the Son of *David*, says he, *why does he call him Lord ? viz.* for this only reason, because the Greater and more Important Relation, on some Occasions, swallows up the Less. As we see in the Case of a Father and a Son in a Commonwealth, when the Son comes to bear Office, the Father that was Superiour Oeconomically, and commanded in the Family, becomes Inferiour to his Son Politically, and is commanded by him in the State : and thus though *Fabius Maximus* might approach his Son, being a Private Person, on Horseback, or which way he pleas'd ; yet when his Son was Consul, he might approach the Supreme Magistrate only on foot : and when the Lictors commanded him from his Son to alight, he not only obey'd, but rejoic'd that he so rightly understood the Dignity he bore.

bore. But I might have brought an Example from Scripture. When *Joseph* was in his Father's house, he paid humble Submission and Subjection to his Parents : but when he was advanc'd to be a Prince in *Egypt*, 'twas God's will, that not only the Elder Sheaves should do Obeysance to the Younger ; but even that the Sun and Moon themselves, *i. e.* his Father and Mother (by their Representatives his Brethren) should bow their Heads in Homage to him. And by the same Rule, *Christ*, who express'd Obedience to his Parents while he appear'd nothing but their Son, had Obedience belonging to him, when it appear'd he was their Lord and Saviour.

But now, though these things are true, and that *omnis Christi actio nostra est instructio*, every Action of *Christ* is our Instruction : Yet it will concern us to take heed, that we rightly understand his Actions, and that we make not a wrong Construction of that, which was given to be our Instruction. We must not wrest or extend this Carriage of *Christ* to his Mother, to the Prejudice of our Parents Authority : for it does not warrant any one, that is a Son or Daughter among us, so soon as they are out of their Minority, to cry, *Ætatem habeo*, I am of Age, and owe no more Observance : Or as soon as they are promoted to any Dignity, presently to change their Behaviour, and to take up a new Compellation to them. No, in respect of a dutiful Regard to be paid to those that Bore and Educated us, *Christ* would have all men for ever to be Pupils, for ever to continue in a Voluntary Reverential Wardship, as I may say, to them : and we read, that he prefer'd Duty to Parents, even before the *Corban* ; the Maintenance of them, before the giving Oblations for the Reparations of the Temple. Again, no Spiritual Change

Change in our Condition absolves us from the Duty of Children ; though we are called to a Divine Office and holy Ministry , we are not exempted from Filial Obedience and Natural Affection. And therefore the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* in this particular is to be abominated, *ubi pietatis genus ducitur, esse crudelem*, among whom it is held a Sublime and abstracted Piece of Piety, for those that are once enter'd into a Covent, to forget their Parents and Kindred according to the Flesh ; as soon as their Persons are thus sequester'd from them, to sequester also their Natural Affections ; and to espouse the Interest of their Spiritual Cognation, though it be never so Prejudicial to their Natural. In some Cases indeed, *religiosior est mentium copula*, the Union of the Mind, upon long experience of mutual Vertue, may deservedly be counted a faster Tye, than that of Consanguinity , accompanied with less Vertue. As our Lord on this account preferr'd his Cognation to his Disciples, before that with his Kinsmen ; esteem'd those to be nearer Allied to him, in whom he found Faith, than those that had the same Bloud running in their Veins. *And looking upon his Disciples, he said, Behold my Brethren, my Sisters, and my Mother.* But then in such Changes of Condition, as are the mere Inventions of Men, as the Orders of Friars, and their Rules of Worship are, to add Barbarity to Superstition, under the pretence of Greater Sanctity to shake off the Duties of Humanity, no Church can justifie, but that which justifies yet greater Impieties. I proceed to the second Circumstance I observed in *Christ's* reprovng his Mother, the Terms in which he reprov'd her,

What:

What have I to do with thee?

This was a Phrase used among the Jews, to repulse those that moved any thing to them unseasonably, or unworthy of them to do in their Opinion; and also to express their Resentment, if they thought themselves hardly dealt with. The Widow of *Zerephath* used it this last way to the Prophet *Elijah*, when she conceiv'd the Cohabitation of so holy a Person with her, and his near Inspection into her Life, was the Cause of her Childs death, *What have I to do with thee* (says she) *O thou Man of God! art thou come unto me to call my Sins to remembrance, and to slay my Son?* And *David* used it the first way, 2 *Sam.* 19. to *Abishai*, urging him to put *Shimei* to death upon the Day of his Restoration to the Kingdom, because he had Curs'd him in his Flight from *Jerusalem*. Says he, *What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zerviah?* And notwithstanding the great Dislike and Offence this Phrase exprest, our Lord forbore not to use it to his Mother, intermeddling in his Divine Employment, *Woman*, says he, *What have I to do with thee?*

I confess it was *durum Dictum*, a harsh Speech, considering the Person to whom 'twas spoken: but 'twas also, if rightly weighed, *frugiferum Dictum*, a Speech full of good Instruction and Profit: For it shews *Christ's* equal and impartial Deportment, as he is a Lord and Saviour, to all Persons whatsoever, without Consideration of Country, Acquaintance, or Kindred: The very Womb that bare him, in an Unadvise'd Action, shall not go away without a Rebuke; if his Mother does that which is Dishonourable to his Office, she shall hear that which is less honourable
to

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to her Relation ; if she forgets her Duty, he will forget her Name and Title. A good Lesson for those Favourites of Christ in these our Days, who call themselves his Elect, and his Darling Children, however they live in Disobedience to his Laws ; and fancy he can see nothing in them that displeases him, whatever wickedness they commit. Though Propinquity in Grace be more in *Christ's* account, than Propinquity in Blood : yet if even those that are ally'd to him by Grace, sin presumptuously against him, they will find him but a rough Kinsman. *Though Coniah were as the Signet upon my Right hand,* says God, *yet would I pluck him thence.* And if *Peter*, the most Zealous of the Apostles, shall take upon him to tempt *Christ*, he shall bear the Name of Adversary, *Get thee behind me Satan.* If the Provocations of the Servants of God be Great, however near and close their former Relation to him was, they will find him as far Estranged from them : and in Case their Provocations be of a less and meaner Allay, they will receive a Check, as the Blessed Virgin here did. And so I proceed to the Reason why Christ reprov'd her, Because she unseasonably interpos'd in what she ought not to have meddled, prompted him to work a Miracle before his Time was come.

— *My Time,* says he, *is not yet come.*

These, and the foregoing Words, *Woman, what have I to do with thee ?* utterly o'erthrow all the vain and false Glories, which the Church of Rome Superstitiously, Idolatrously, and injuriously, rather than Devoutly, heap upon our Lady : ascribing to her impeccability and being born without Sin, the Title of Queen of Heaven, and a perpetual Regency over

H

her

her Son; &c. But as Stout and resolute Souldiers, where the Works are weakest, shew the greatest Valour: So those of that Church shrink not for all the Assault they receive from my Text; but the ruder the Shock is, the more obstinately they maintain their Post. They affirm that the Action of the Blessed Virgin here was not only without Blame, but full of Faith, Charity, Humility, Prudence, &c. and that *Christ* was so far from being angry with her, or having any Cause given him to be so, that he took up a feigned and dissembled Dislike, to have an Occasion only to teach the World, and not her neither, That the Power by which a Prophet works Miracles, is not derived from his Parents, nor to be govern'd by them, but wholly by the Spirit of God, says *Cornelius à Lapide*, *In ipsa nulla fuit culpa; ergo non vera fuit Christi reprehensio, reprehendere tamen illam videtur, ut non ipsam, sed nos doceret, in operibus theandricis parentes nihil habent juris*, and so forth. Thus the Jesuite is not asham'd to make our Lord Jesuitize, i. e. falsifie and dissemble: but the time would be ill spent to confute such gross Follies and Blasphemies, which chuse rather to find a Miscarriage in *Christ*, than in his Mother; to make him angry without a Cause, or to feign an Unjust Anger, than to allow it possible for her to give him a Just Cause to be angry. But the Explanation of these Words [*my hour is not yet come*] will more plainly shew wherein our Lady deserv'd a Reprehension.

The Hour of *Christ* is sometimes understood of the Hour of his Death, as 'tis said, They could not lay hold of him, *because his Hour was not yet come*. But here it is to be understood of his Season or Opportunity to do a thing: as when he answered his Brethren, that ask'd him to go up to *Jerusalem* to the Feast, *Your Time,*

Time, says he, *is always, but my Time is not yet come.* But here by the way, we must not conceive any thing of the *Hours* assign'd to *Christ* of that nature, which the *Arrians* and *Priscillians* did, who said, He was subject to *Fate* and *Necessity*, and bound up to the *Observation of Times*, and could not therefore be the *Eternal Son of God*. *Christ's Death* was not impos'd on him by any *Fatal Necessity*, as himself declares Chap. 10. and 18. of our Evangelist: *No man taketh my Life from me, says he, but I lay it down of my self; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it up.* But when 'tis said, *The Hour of his Death was not yet come*, it means no more than this, That he had not yet finish'd the *Work* for which he came into the *World*, he had not fully preach'd the *Gospel*, accomplish'd the *Prophecies* that were of him, confirm'd his *Disciples*, &c. i. e. the *Hour* by his own *Eternal Wisdom* chosen, was not yet come; the *Hour*, as *St Augustine* speaks, *non Necessitatis, sed Voluntatis*; the *Hour* not of his *Necessity*, but his *Will*; not of his *Constraint*, but of his *Counsel*. And the like may be said of the *Hour* of his working *Miracles*, he attended no *Critical Minute*, or favourable *Conjuncture* of the *Stars* to assist him: as to his *Power*, he could have wrought them when he would, every *Hour* was the *Hour* of his *Power*, but every *Hour* was not the *Hour* of his *Opportunity*; he could have turned the *Water* into *Wine* at the time his *Mother* spoke to him, as well as at any other, but the *End* for which he did it, would not have fallen out so *Easily* and *Naturally* at one time, as at another; and though the *Miracle* had been the same, the *Effect* would not have been so great. An *Opportunity* is not to be measured or judged by the *Power* of the *Agent*, but by the *Purpose* and *Design* of his *Action*;

and the Purpose of *Christ's* present Action here was, to give a Testimony of his Divine Power, that Men might the readilier believe in him; his Inferiour and Subordinate Purpose to this was So to dispose his Miracle, as it might best conduce to this End.

And in the first place therefore 'twas of no small Moment, that he should order it so, that he might be seen to be the Free and Sole Agent of it, without any Complice or Confederate, without Monitor or Director: that it proceeded meerly from a Divine Motive as well as Power, and tended to a Divine End; to use our Adversaries Words, that *in operibus Theandricis Parentes nihil habent juris*, a Prophets Parents have nothing to do in his Divine Operations. It was enough alone to have put off the Hour of *Christ's* working this Miracle, had it been come, his Mothers prompting him to do it. Secondly, It was of great Importance to chuse the most Advantageous Season or Minute for the Performance of it, *viz.* when it would be both most remarkable, and most grateful; and that would have been after the perfect Absumption of the Wine provided for the Feast, when the Guests felt the Defect of it: Abundance is most welcome, when it succeeds Want. Thirdly, It was considerable to perform it, when it was sure to move the Greatest Admiration and Astonishment; and that was, before there was any Intimation or Expectation of it. The Surprise of a Rare Event creates most Wonder: as we see the Good Wine did here in the Master of the Feast, he not knowing whence it came; the Unexpected Change and Excellence of it was a Miracle to him, before he knew 'twas derived from a Miracle.

Now the Blessed Virgin forestall'd and discompos'd all these Divine and Prudential Purposes of our
 Lord.

Lord. First, By her inconsiderate Advising him of the Want of Wine, she disparag'd his Prophetick Power, as if he had been Ignorant, or less Observant of what past, and of what was needful for him to do; and he might well answer her trifling Solicitude with Indignation: as *Elisba* did the young Prophets, that took upon them to inform him, that his Master would be taken that day from his head: *I know that*, says he, *hold ye your peace*. Secondly, She precipitated the Proper Season of the Miracle, and had her motion taken place, the Benefit of it would scarce have appeared to have been a Benefit. Thirdly, She appears, by interposing her Motherly Authority, to have affected part of the Glory of the Miracle, *ut quæ Filium haberet tali potentia præditum*, as being the Mother of such a Wonderful Son: so that whatever Honour *Christ* had acquired, a share of it might redound to the Womb that bare him, and to the Paps that gave him suck. Fourthly, The highest Motive which seems to have induced her to desire the Miracle, was some Secular Regard: as to oblige the Married Couple, to gratifie the Guests, or the like: and this appears by her whispering to the Servants to observe what our Lord commanded them, as a beneficial Obedience to all that were concerned in the Feast.

And thus her Purpose was as different from *Christ's* Purpose, her Design from his Design: as Good Cheer is from Preaching the Gospel; as Wine is another thing from Faith; complementing a Friend from Converting men to Christianity; and she justly deserved the Reprehension she received. For 'twas too low and mean an Imagination of his Power, that 'twas to be engaged meerely to supply the Defects of a Meal, that those Divine Operations that were design'd

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sign'd to destroy the Kingdom of Satan, and to set up the Kingdom of God in the World, were fit to be terminated, as well as employed, in serving Tables. We read indeed in the Legend of Romish Saints, that a holy Abbot or Hermit meeting with another holy Abbot or Hermit, (meerly to exercise their Faith, and to shew which had the greater Favour with God, and the profuser measure of his Graces) would vie Miracles with one another, as Juglers do Tricks, remove a Hill, or change the Site of a Forest, and the like: Inventions, as one says, *ferrei oris, & plumbei cordis*, of a blockish Understanding, and a shameless Impudence. *Christ* did not prostitute his Miracles, to light or Vain-glorious Purposes: That he turn'd Water into Wine at the present Marriage-Feast, was not so much to gratifie the Palates of the Company, as to give them, and the World after them, a Taste of the *Inociduum Nectar*, the Fruit of the Eternal Vine that grows only in his Father's Kingdom.

And here it may be worthy our Observation, That both *Christ* and his Apostles were many times more Severe against the Mistakes of Men, than against their Misdeeds; more offended with those that did not rightly Apprehend the Faith and the Design of it, than those that Oppos'd it. *Get thee behind me, Satan*, was a Sharp Reproof, not for Infidelity, but for an Unadvised Carnal Tenderneſs shew'd to *Christ*. *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were made terrible Examples, not again for Denying the Faith, but for thinking a Cheat or Lye were reconcileable with the Profession of it, or could be hid from the Spirit of God. And in the Passage here before us, notwithstanding the Action of the Blessed Virgin was not without Good-Will, Charity, and a Perswasion of *Christ's* Divine Power: yet because she had not a due Regard of that

that Divine Power, of the Dignity of a Miracle, and our Lord's Office, but thought she might be the Disposer of them, she received a sharp Rebuke.

And if ever this Observation was worthy a Serious Consideration and adverting to, 'tis in these Days, in which the Gospel is so Universally profest, and the Faith so Factiously Contended for, and the Principal Purpose and Design of it so little regarded. The Church of *Rome* on the one side, stands upon the Antiquity of her Religion and Worship, though her Antiquity be no better, than that of an old Ship's, which has been pieced and altered, till little remains, beside the Name, of the first Building; Ignorance and Superstition in some Ages, and Interest and Ambition in all, having patcht up their boasted Antiquity, till 'tis liker to Heathenism, than the Gospel at first profest in that Church: We of this Nation on the other side stand as much upon our Reformation, and because our Doctrine and Worship are more holy and consonant to Scripture, we care not though our Lives and Manners be worse than theirs whose Errors we condemn. There are others again among us, who are perswaded they have yet purer Ordinances than we, and that they have Reformed the Reformation; and so it be to promote their Pretences, that Faction, Schism, Sedition, Treason, Murder of Princes, and Subversion of States, are a Justifiable and Holy Zeal. These Misapprehensions and Erroneous Conceits in Religion, I say, are more pernicious to it, and hateful to God, than direct Opposition and Blasphemy against it; and *Turks*, *Jews*, and Infidels have not hindred the Progress and Propagation of the Gospel so much, as the Scandalous Dissensions and the Unfutable Lives of the Professors of it. And all this while, the Ways and Modes of serving

serving God are not the Service of God it self, but Holiness, Righteousness, Charity, Obedience, Meekness, Peaceableness, and the like. All Manners and Forms of Worship are good, that are consonant to Scripture, conduce to Edification, and establish'd by Just Authority, I say, and establish'd by Just Authority: for 'tis not allow'd to Private Men to be the Fashioners or Chusers of the Publick Way of Worship; if this were permitted, the Issue would be only Confusion; and, the Dissensions about the Circumstances of Religion, would destroy the Substance and Essentials of it. *Christ* laid not down his Life to establish these or those Rites or Forms of Worship, but, as himself professes, *To destroy the Works of the Devil*. And this is that which ought to be the Business and Concern of his Followers, that about which all their Care and Sollicitude should be employ'd, against which their Anger and Animosity should be directed, I say, to abolish Sin, and to make Vertue and Piety flourish in the Earth. And they that lay not the Weight and Stress of Religion in this, are Impertinent and Trifling in the Faith, and Impious in their Zeal; they understand not the most Material and weighty Part of their Profession; and instead of receiving an *Euge*, or Well-done from *Christ* at the last Day, they will receive a Check or Increpation, as the Blessed Virgin did in my Text, and not only so, but a Renunciation and a Condemnation. God give us Grace to be Wise in a Wise Religion; and Holy in a Holy Faith: and to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be ascribed all Honour, Glory and Thanksgiving, now, and for evermore. *Amen.*

The

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D A N. ix. 26.

*And after threescore and two Weeks
Messiah shall be cut off: but not for
himself—*



HIS is one of the most clear and most Illustrious Predictions of the Passion of our Lord, which is contain'd in Scripture; it comprehending not only the several Stages of his drawing near to the World for its Redemption, his Advances and Pauses: but unfolding also the wonderful Mystery, and seeming Contradiction in it, *viz.* That the Salvation of the World should be wrought by the Cutting-Off, or Destruction of its Saviour; the Son of God made subject to the Violence and Out-rages of the Sons of Men. I call'd the Words a Prediction, but I might have styl'd them a Description or Register of all the Passages in that strange and astonishing Transaction; they declaring
I the

the Design and Circumstances, the How, and for Whose behalf, and the precise Time (however obscurely) of the Death of the *Messiah*.

However therefore at this Day every Child is catechiz'd and perfect in this Point of Chronology, *imperante Augusto natus est Christus, imperante Tiberio crucifixus est Christus*, in the Reign of *Augustus Caesar* Christ was born, in that of *Tiberius* he was crucifi'd; and none needs to have recourse to the dark Calculations of remote Ages for this matter: yet with good Reason we may look back to Prophecies, when they are fulfill'd; and scan *Ænigmatical* Speeches, even after they are expounded. For though this seems to be seeking of Light in Shades and Darkness; the retiring back again into Night and Obscurity, after the *Day-spring from on high hath visited us*: yet not only much Confirmation, but much Illustration of things Believ'd may be fetcht from the remote Springs of Antiquity; for not only the Evangelists write the History of *Christ*, but also the Law and the Prophets in many things Evangelize: as the Prophet *Daniel* does in my Text, *And after threescore and two Weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself*.

We may observe in the Words these two General Parts.

I. The Angels Prediction to *Daniel* of the Death of the *Messiah*, or *Christ*, *After threescore and two Weeks Messiah shall be cut off*.

II. His Correction of what he had said, or rather Direction for the right understanding of his Prediction, and to prevent misapprehension, — *He shall be cut off, but not for himself*.

In the first of these two General Parts, the Angels Prediction, I shall observe more particularly two things: The Substance of it, the Excision of the *Messiah*,

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Messiah — *he shall be cut off.* And the Circumstance of the Time of it, when it should come to pass, *After three score and two Weeks* — I begin first with the Substance of the Prediction,

— *He shall be cut off.*

This Term of *cutting-off* does usually imply in Scripture three things. 1. The untimely destroying a Person from the Land of the Living. 2. The destroying him as a Criminal or Malefactor. 3. The destroying him by God himself, and if not always immediately, yet by his Appointment. I shall give but one Proof of this, of the many that might be brought, *Exod. 31. 14.* God gives this Charge by the mouth of *Moses*, — *Every one that defileth my Sabbath, shall surely be put to Death* — *that Soul shall be Cut-off from among his people.* In which Words are express'd the Person's untimely Death, that he dyes as a Criminal, and that God is the Author that dooms him to it.

Now Death is call'd a *Cutting-off* for two Reasons. First, Because a *Cutting-off* is the discontinuation of a thing from that to which it was before united : or Secondly, A shortning of it from the Measure it had, or would have arriv'd to. Thus the Untimely Death of a Person is the shortning of the Days he might have liv'd to, and the separating him from the Society of the Living, of which he was a Member. And however strange and wonderful it is, such was the End of the *Messiah* : after all the glorious Prophecies and magnificent Elogies relating to his Person and his Kingdom, as that he should be call'd *The Wonderful, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, that his Dominion should reach to the*

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Ends of the Earth, and to the End of Time, he was Cut-off and Extinguist like a Mortal Man; after the fashion, as the Psalmist speaks, of common Princes, Ye are styled Gods, but ye shall dye like Men. Like Men? nay he dy'd like a Malefactor, and by God's Sentence and Decree. And it was upon the account of his Tragical End, and the misunderstanding of other Predictions of him; especially that one, Christ shall live for ever, that both the Jews of old despised him, and those of these Days blaspheme him, calling him, from the manner of his Death, and the Structure of his Cross, The Warp and the Woof. It was by reason also of his Ignominious Death, that the Heathen derided and reproach'd our Holy Faith, saying, We believ'd in a hang'd Man.

But neither Jew nor Gentile had any just Cause of Exception against our Lord for his Violent and Untimely Death; I say, there was nothing strange, or hard to be digested by either of them in this thing: For 'twas the Practice of them both to sacrifice the Innocent, for the Guilty; the Unoffending Victims, for Offending Men: Nay, 'twas usual among the Gentiles for the Noblest and most Sacrosanct Persons, their Kings, and Generals, and holy Virgins, to devote themselves to Death for the Preservation of their Country. Why then should the *Devoting of Christ for the Salvation of the Whole World be held irrational and foolish by them?* Why did they despise in another Religion, what they held Honourable in their own? And the Jews, had yet less reason to be scandaliz'd (especially the most Learned among them who were yet only offended) who saw their *Messiah* daily slain before their Eyes in so many Rites and Mysteries, the Paschal Lamb, the Scape-Goat, the Goat for the Sin-Offering, in a word, all their Expiatory

tory Sacrifices were Prefigurations of *Christ's* Passion. Beside those, that were Learned, were sensible, That the Way of propitiating God by the Blood of Beasts, was of it self Irrational, and had no Efficacy in it, but as it related to the Blood of *Christ*. The *Jews* therefore with less reason than the Gentiles disclaimed the *Messiah*, coming in the Guise of a Sacrifice, and drencht in his own Blood; when 'twas his Blood alone that sanctify'd all their Forefathers, and their own Offerings, and distinguisht their Temple from a common Shambles or Slaughter-house.

The reason that the Cross of *Christ* has given such Scandal in all Times, and that so great a Part of the World have thought it Monstrous, That a Divine Person should undergo an Ignominious Death, arises from the Slight Apprehension Men generally have of Sin, and their ignorance of the Malignity of its Nature; they look upon it as a mere Transient Act, and think that the Guilt of it passes away, as soon as the Fact; they have no Unkindness to their own Wicked Ways, and fancy God has none neither; that any Trifle will make Compensation for them, or that God will pass them by without any Compensation at all. But if they would weigh the Odiousness of Sin to God, by its Contrariety to his Holy Nature, and the fearful Judgments he has denounc'd against it, and that it cannot go unpunisht, if God be just and true, *i. e.* if God be God: Again, if they would consider, that the Greatness of an Offence arises in proportion to the Greatness of the Person Offended, and then compute what would be a Competent Satisfaction for offending an Infinite and Eternal Deity, they would not think it monstrous, *ut medela responderet morbo*, that a Divine Person should be found only worthy to do Right to a Divine Person. Men may

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may well be astonish'd at the Goodness of God, and adore his Mercy, that he vouchsaf'd to give his Son to be a Ransom for Sinners, but none can justly wonder, that he requir'd so Honourable an Amends for the Violation of his Majesty ; or that a less Sanctity than *Christ's* was sufficient either to intercede for, or to Counterpoise the Guilt of the Whole World.

But as there are those that despise the Cross of *Christ*, and count the *Bloud of the Covenant*, as the Apostle speaks, *an unholy thing* : so there are those again on the other side, who are no less Enemies to it, by ascribing to it what was never the Will or Meaning of our Lord that they should : and these are of two Sorts ; Those of the Church of *Rome*, who Superstitiously and Idolatrously Worship the Cross, ascribe to it the Power of driving away Devils, conferring Divine Graces, and the like. The others are those among us, who teach, That since *Christ* has Suffer'd, all Guilt and Condemnation for Sin is taken away in respect of Believers : like those in the Apostles time who affirm'd, That after the Faith of *Christ* was once entertain'd, all that was necessary for Salvation was perform'd, and men need not be solicitous for their future Behaviour, whether 'twere Righteous, or Unrighteous. But *St Paul*, *Heb. 10. 26.* stops the mouths of all such as thus pervert the Grace purchas'd by *Christ's* Death. *If we sin wilfully*, says he, *after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation.* As if he would have said, Although *Christ* cannot be Cut-off any more in his Person, yet he may and will be Cut-off again in the Fruits and Benefits of his first Cutting-off, from those that abuse them. Which
Words

Words, though spoken of Apostates to the Faith, will hold true also of Subverters of the Faith. And there is a Passage in this Chapter of *Daniel* before us, well worthy the observation of all those, who sit now presumptuously under the Gospel, which is this : When the Angel had reveal'd to *Daniel* the Time when the Captivity in *Babylon* should expire, and that the People should return, and rebuild *Jerusalem* and the Temple : and not only so, but that the long-promis'd and much-desir'd *Messiah* should be given them ; and the Prophet thought all was now well, and nothing could be added to the Felicity of the Nation ; immediately it follows, that after so many Weeks again (for the succeeding Transgressions of the People) the so-long'd for Prince and Saviour, the *Messiah*, should be cut-off as if he had never been : So that he should be given in a manner, and not given unto the Nation ; but be the Cause of a Second and Greater Destruction, than the foregoing Captivity, even the final Rejection of the House of *Israel*. And 'tis dreadful to consider, that the giving of a Saviour to many *Christians* shall have the like Success ; that by reason of their Presumption of I know not what Favour and Election of God's, and their Continuance in their Unreform'd Lives, this Blessing shall be turn'd into a Curse ; and He that was cut-off For them, shall be again cut off From them ; and the Private State of their Souls, like the Publick State of the *Jews*, shall be much more Calamitous after their Redemption, than before.

And now what Use shall we make of this first Branch, the Substance of the Angels Prediction, *the Excision of the Messiah, He shall be cut off*—? Shall I exhort you, after the manner of the Church of *Rome*, to set before you Pictures of our Lord's Passion,

on, representing his macerated and dilacerated Body hanging on the Cross between two Thieves, and attended by his Virgin Mother fallen into a Swoun, and expect that the like Effects of an o'r-whelming Sorrow may be seen in you? No, I shall rather desire that all such Pageantry and Ostentation of misplaced Grief may be remov'd far from you; and as our Lord directed the Women (who wept for him when he bore his Cross to Mount *Calvary*) to spend their Tears on the right Object, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for your selves, and your approaching misery*: So let me advise you, Not to weep for what *Christ* suffer'd more than sixteen hundred Years ago for your sakes, seeing he is now at the Right Hand of his Father in Glory; but to weep for your Own Souls, that you have made no more Advantage by his Sufferings. Weep not therefore because he was mockt, and spit on, and set at nought by the Souldiers, but weep because thou thy self hast despis'd him, set his Gospel at nought, perhaps derided it. Sigh not because *Christ* was scourg'd, and crown'd with Thorns, and hung so many hours upon the Cross, but sigh truly and deeply that all these things have not moved thee to forsake one Sin, or to mortifie one Lust; mourn sensibly and pungently that he drunk the bitter Cup of his Passion in vain, as to thee, or for thy greater Condemnation: For if it be a Sad Reflection, that he liv'd a persecuted and afflicted Life, and dy'd a Calamitous Death, 'tis yet a much Sadder, that such his Sufferings do not Expiate, but aggravate thy Guilt and Damnation.

The second Use I shall desire you to make of the painful and ignominious Death of so Divine a Person as the *Messiah*, is to consider the Malignant Nature of Sin, which (however easily and hourly, regardlessly

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gardlessly and remorselessly we commit) cost our Lord his Heart blood to expiate; and after we were once infected by it, nothing less than his being Accurs'd, could put us into a Capacity again of being Blest; nothing but his being Cut-off could restore us to Life and Felicity.

Let the third Use we make of the *Messiah's* Death be, To consider how precious a Thing the Soul of a Man is; that 'tis such a Jewel that the Son of God came down from Heaven to save from perishing; compass'd the Earth, like a greedy Merchant, to purchase; set his Glory and Life at nought to ransom! And now 'tis ransom'd at so Immense a Rate, is of more Value than before; and he that sells it now for Gold, or Pleasure, or any other Worldly Consideration, sells not only an *Immortal Spirit*, but a *Divine Purchase*; sells his *Soul Redeem'd*, parts with his *Soul* and his *Messiah* too; delivers it up together with the *Ransom* and *Satisfaction*, after no more can be expected. When the Devil therefore offers to barter with us his beggarly and deceitful Wares for this Divine Treasure; as the *Satyrist* said with indignation to a Gluttonous Person, that gave more for a Fish than would have bought the Fisherman, *Hoc pretium Squame?* all this Revenue for Finns and Scales? So let us say with no less Indignation, Shall we give our Immortal Souls, the Blood of *Christ*, and Eternal Glory, for a little Momentary Pleasure? such as the very Slaves to it set often below a contemptible Summ of Money, even when they have drawn their Purse, and bid for it, put it up again, as thinking it too dear? I proceed to the Circumstance of the Time of the Cutting-off the *Messiah*.

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After

After threescore and two Weeks.

From what *Epocha* or Computation of Time these threescore and two Weeks begin to be reckon'd, or in what King's Reign they determin'd, is very difficult to pronounce, by reason that the Scripture is silent in the Extent or Number of Years of the Reigns of the Kings of *Persia*, and those Accounts we have from Heathen Writers (however competently punctual and sutable to their own Chronologies, yet) to make them fall in, and come to a Concurrence with Holy Story, (one reckoning by *Lunary* Years, and the other by *Solary*) has been found a very hard Task: insomuch that some that have labour'd over curiously in this matter, while they have sought to reconcile the Times, have lost much of their own; and instead of giving Satisfaction, have only forfeited their Discretion. I shall not therefore engage in so difficult and ambitious an Undertaking, but content my self to follow the Conclusion of the soberest Expositors, hasting through the ragged Ways and barren Tracts of Chronology and Arithmetick, as a Traveller that delights not in his Journey, and not sitting down, and amusing my self in them, as if I took pleasure in the Passage.

The plain Account is this, The Prophet *Jeremy*, long before our Prophets time, had foretold, that the Captivity of the *Jews* in *Babylon* should continue seventy Years. Now *Daniel* being a Captive in *Babylon* about the End of this time, and mindful of *Jeremy's* Prophecy, besought of God, by fasting and Supplications, an Accomplishment of the promis'd Deliverance: whereupon an Angel was sent to him, with much more Gladsome Tydings than he expected,

ed, viz. to assure him, that not only at the Expiration of the Seventy Years prefixt, the People should certainly return, but that after Seventy Weeks of Years more, *i. e.* seventy times seven Weeks (a Week of Years consisting of seven Years) the righteous and glorious Prince Messiah should be sent. And the more to confirm *Daniel* in this joyful News, the Angel (according to the Distribution of the Time for the bringing this Counsel and Determination of God to pass) divides the Seventy Weeks of Years into three Parts, assigns seven Weeks of Years for the rebuilding *Jerusalem* and the Temple, threescore and two from that to the Birth of the *Messiah* and his Cutting-off, or at least for the Preaching of the Gospel by his Disciples; and one Week of Years remaining for the destroying of Unbelievers: as these things may be collected from *ver. 21.* to the end of the Chapter.

In which Distribution of Time God's singular Goodness and Wisdom, in chusing the Season for sending his Son into the World, is very remarkable. He sent him not the first seven Weeks, or forty nine Years, after the Jews return from *Babylon*, that the City and Sanctuary were building, and the Nation re-establishing, for that was a busie and troublesome Time, but sixty two Weeks after that, when they were settled and at Leisure to attend Divine things. And for this Reason God also so order'd it, that *Christ* should be born in a Calm and Serene Age of the World, in the peaceful Reign of *Augustus Cæsar*, when, as the Historian says, *universi terrarum orbis aut pax, aut pectus*, that there was either an Universal Peace, or Treaty of Peace through the Whole World. God thus stilling the Noise of Wars, and the Tumults of the Nations, that the Voice of his Son might be heard; gave men nothing to intend,

that they might intend Religion. But though he offer'd the *Jews* this Opportunity for their Salvation, they laid not hold of it : but when they were disengaged from Civil Affairs, they engaged and immers'd themselves in all manner of Sin and Wickedness ; when their Wars ceas'd, their Lusts began to rage ; when the Architects and Builders had finish'd their Work, the Contrivers of Iniquity set to plot and contrive theirs. So that few were at leisure to compute how *Daniel's* Weeks, for the coming of the *Messiah*, past away, and much less to prepare themselves for his Reception ; and accordingly when he appear'd, so far they were from paying him Obedience, that they knew him not ; from acknowledging him their King, that they crucifi'd him. They dreamt of a second *Joshua* for their *Messiah*, not of a *Melchizedeck* ; of a fighting, not a preaching King : when therefore he rebuk'd their Vices, they conspir'd his Death ; and cut him off, instead of cutting off their Sins. 'Twas no wonder therefore, that God allow'd but one Week of Years for the destroying so Carnal, so wicked, so ungrateful a People.

'Tis an Ominous and Fatal Sign, when God has given Eminent Deliverance to a Nation, and allow'd it time for the Re-establishing it self, if at least in the second place it makes not Religion and his Worship its Business : but falls from Secular Employments to Sensual and Sinful ; never reflecting either why he did so severely punish them, or why again so Graciously Restore them. We of this Nation attend not the fulfilling of the Weeks foretold by *Daniel*, for the Coming of the *Messiah* in the Flesh, his Cutting off, and the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, these things are already past : But there are other Weeks in which we are concern'd, which are not yet fulfill'd, *viz.* the few

few Weeks before God may possibly call us to account for the ill Use we have made of his Glorious Restoration of our King and Nation, and his other Illustrious Mercies: Or if in his Wisdom he shall think fit to adjourn this Account to the General Audit at the Last Day, then the very few Weeks, before we that are here present shall be seal'd up for that Dreadful Day by our Departure out of this Life. And in the mean time we have daily an Image or representation of that Great Assize of the Whole World, in the Absolution which the Church pronounces to Penitent Sinners, and consequently in binding over to Judgment the Impenitent: For though the Righteous are not juridically and finally absolv'd in this World, nor the Wicked condemn'd; yet the Issue that both are to expect is foreshew'd; and however there seems for a time a Forgetfulness of the one and the other, that the Just appear to go away without their Reward, and the Unjust to be Tenants to an Easie Lord, that will never call them to account: yet they will receive their Recompence according to what they have done in this Life, and find though *Christ* suffered for Sin, he never suffered or tolerated Sin; but that his Death will prove Effectual for their Condemnation, for whom it prov'd not Effectual for their Salvation.

The Reason that Men put off the Fear of the Lord's Coming to Judgment, or think his Coming but a Fable, is, because they consider not how far he is already advanc'd on his Way towards them, how many Stages he has past, and how very near he is come. He is advanc'd long since to the *Destruction of Jerusalem*; there's the first prophesied Stage of his Coming, and so many Weeks of Years past. Secondly, *His Gospel is preach'd through the World: Christ*

is

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is arriv'd so much Nearer on his Journey towards us. Thirdly, *Anti-Christ is come* : the Apostle speaks of him as entred into the World, though as 'twere *incognito* or conceal'd, in his time : but now for many Years he has shew'd himself openly, and rag'd in the Church : and there's the Third Sett of Weeks foretold for *Christ's* coming, past : So that there remains but one Parcel of Weeks more, before we shall see him at our very Doors, *i. e.* coming in the Clouds of Heaven to judge the Quick and the Dead. We have seen three Predictions of his Coming actually fulfill'd, and is it possible our Sins should perswade us, that he will tire by the Way, and that the fourth shall not come to pass ? The Night succeeds not the Day, Winter the Summer so certainly, as *Christ's* Second Coming shall succeed in the time appointed. *And seeing these things shall be so, what manner of Persons,* as St Peter says, *ought we to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness ?* My Text says, *Christ was not cut off for Himself,* let us take care to be of the Number of those he was cut off *For*, and not of those he shall be cut off *From*. And so I pass to my Second General Part, the Angel's Direction for the right Understanding of his Prediction,

He shall be cut off, but not for himself.

The Words in the Original [*ve en lo*] which our Translators render, *but not for himself*, and in the Margent, *and shall have nothing*, are so concise and abrupt, that they leave place to several Apprehensions to add, what they think will best fill up their Sense : But all that is offered being merely conjectural, and also less edifying than what we read in our own Bibles, I shall not decline what I there find.

And

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And it may be understood in two Respects, *That Christ was cut off, and not for Himself.*

1. *In Respect of any Demerit or Fault of his.* There were many that pretended to be the *Messiah*, that were Thieves and Murderers, and *were cut off*, but 'twas justly for their Offences. But the Angel prevents here the least Suspicion, that the *True Messiah* should be a *Guilty Person, cut off for his own Crimes.* He did *no Sin*, as St Peter says, *neither was Guile found in his mouth*: But he could make that bold Challenge to all the Nations of the *Jews*, *Which of you convinceth me of Sin?* It fared indeed with him, as it did with *David*, a good King, and his Type, who *Psal.* the 59th and the 3^d, complains of his Enemies after this manner, *They lye in wait for my Soul, the Mighty are gathered against me; not for My Transgressions, nor for my Sin, O Lord! they run and prepare themselves without my Fault.* No: if any man could take away our *Messiah*, by justly alledging Impiety against him, we would readily deliver him up our selves: But when he was Holy in his Life and Doctrine, when his Righteousness was attested from Heaven before, and in, and after his being in the World, by Prophecies, Miracles, *by the Voice*, to use St Peter's expression, *which came to him from the Excellent Glory, saying, This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased*: by his Resurrection, Ascension, and sending the Holy Ghost, we may well adhere to such a Saviour, and excuse the seeming Shame of his *Cutting off*, for those real Glories which none beside himself ever pretended to.

2. *Not for himself, in respect of any Benefit he received.* If the Angel had told the Prophet, That the Cutting off of the *Messiah* had been for any Personal Advantage of his own, though he had taken
Death

Death in the Way to that Advantage, his Suffering had not been Relative to Others, it had been for Himself. But the Scripture disclaims this, and affirms, 'Twas for our Redemption, our Salvation, our being Reconcil'd to God and instated in Glory that Messiah suffered. For he being enthron'd already in Heaven, what could he gain to himself by taking our wretched Flesh, and undergoing all the Miseries and Indignities of a Humane Life? His Sufferings, indeed, were antecedent to his Exaltation, but his Exaltation was not the End or Reason of his Sufferings; *God highly exalted him, and gave him a Name above every Name; that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth:* but this was the Result or Event of the Merit of his Humiliation, not the Design of it. And the Joy which, as the Apostle says, was set before him, and made him endure the Cross, and despise the Shame, was a Contemplation of the Redemption and Recovery of Lost Man, and of the Glory redounding to God by his Atchievement, more than of his own Glory.

There are but two Sorts of Creatures in the Whole Lump of the Creation, for whom the Excision of the *Messiah* could possibly be, namely, *Angels and Men*: but the Scripture excludes the first, *He took not upon him the Nature of Angels, but took upon him the Seed of Abraham*: and the Ancients interpret, That the Nature that was not assum'd, was not ransom'd. The State of the Angels, Good and Bad, immediately after the Fall of those that kept not their Station, was made Immutable, and they are Happy, or Accursed without Change. For *Men* therefore alone the Benefit was: and it being said for *Men indefinitely*, it must be understood of *all*

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all the Race of Mankind ; the Men of all Nations, and of all Times ; *quocunque sub axe*, how remote or in what Clime soever, *quocunque sub scelere*, how remote from Righteousness, or under what Sins soever ; all that Believe, all that Repent, are of the Number of those for whom *Christ* was cut off : as *St John* says, *He is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the Whole World.* None are so much cut off from Goodness, but *Christ* was cut off to bring them to Righteousness and Salvation.

And now to draw to a Conclusion : What does this Universal, this Wonderful Love of *Christ* preach to us ? Who when he was not capable, as God, to dye for us, as our Condition required, espoused our Nature first, that he might espouse our Miseries after ; and that he might bring us to perfect Felicity, was content *to be made perfect by Sufferings*, as the Apostle speaks ? As I said before, an affected weeping and sorrowing in remembrance of *Christ's* Passion, was but an Insignificant Return for his Sufferings : So I may say here, an Empty Admiration of his Love will be as Vain, as Ungrateful, and as unacceptable an Acknowledgment of his Goodness. The Return he expects for his Unspeakable Love is, that we, according to our Measures and proportions should shew the like Love to our Brethren. And this is the Consequence *St John* draws from the Love of *Christ*, *If Christ so loved us, we ought to love one another.*

But what Kind of Love is it, which is requir'd of us ? For the Love commonly practis'd in the World, is but a Confederation for Lust and Pleasure : or an Association (like that of Merchants) for Interest and Profit. Moralists observe three Kinds of Love in regard of the Ends of them, *Love for Pleasure*

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sake, Love for Profit, and Love for Vertues sake. Now the last only of these bears any Resemblance to the Love of *Christ*, which we are to imitate: and which is more perfectly described by the Pen of *S^t Paul*, To be, first, a Benevolence or Well-willing to others, as to our Selves, not excluding our very Enemies; a Candid and favourable Interpretation of all Mens Actions; a Meek Conceit of our selves, and a Lowliness towards others; ready to forgive Injuries, and to overcome Evil with Good, &c. which Love the Apostle prefers even before Martyrdom. Secondly, a Mutual Compassion and being affected as our Brethren are, a sorrowing with them that sorrow, and a rejoicing with them that rejoyce, as the Apostle says, *like Members of the same Body, suffering all, if one suffers; and if one be honoured, all rejoycing.* Thirdly, a Beneficence or Liberal Contribution to those that need, exprest in these Words, *But to do Good and to Contribute forget not.* And this Love, it seems, the Church was so happy in in *S^t Paul's* days, that he thought it superfluous to recommend it among other Duties to the *Thessalonians*, *But as touching Brotherly Love*, says he, *ye need not that I should write unto you.* But had the Apostle liv'd in these days, he would have thought it necessary, not only to say, *Love one another, love Strangers, love your Enemies; but love your Friends, love your Selves.* For we see Men destroy their Souls for the love of their Bodies; and their Bodies again for the love of their Lusts. And if any in these days should pretend to love merely for Vertue and Goodness sake, to have a Kindness to those that gave them an Opportunity to exercise their Charity, even as unto those that did them a Good Turn, they would be his'd at as Hypocrites; and if they should love
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their Enemies, and return Good for Evil, they would be lookt on as base and degenerate, despicable and ridiculous persons. But had not *Christ* been so ridiculous, as to do Good to them that hated him ; so degenerate, as to lay down both his Life and Glory for his Enemies ; none, that now shall be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven, should ever have come there. And he that gave his Soul unto Death for our sakes, looks that we should not only be Believers, but Martyrs for his Sake, if Occasion requires ; that we should be ready to be cut off for Him, that was cut off for us ; that is, be content to lay down our Lives for the Truth, or the Salvation of our Brethren.

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, &c. Amen.

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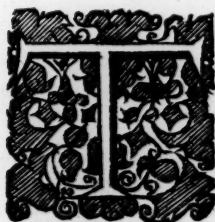
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The Fifth Sermon.

ZECHARY xiii. 6.

And one shall say unto him, What are these Wounds in thy hands? Then shall he answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my Friends.



Here is nothing esteemed more barbarous, than to violate the Laws of Hospitality, to outrage a Stranger-Guest. The sense of Mankind in this Particular may be seen by the fatal Revenge taken for the abuse of the Levite's Concubine; which occasioned the destruction well near of a whole Tribe in *Israel*. But then the Violation of an Ambassadour, and of such an one as comes to offer Peace and Alliance, not only to break the Laws of Hospitality, but of Nations; to Evil-Entreat a *Sacrosanct Person*, and to return Hostility for Friendship

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ship and Amity, what can be found sufficient to make an Atonement for such Inhumanity? *How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad Tydings of Good things?* And how deformed and detestable on the other side must the Ingratitude of those be, that are injurious to such Messengers? 'Tis no wonder if such Barbarity creates irreconcilable Feuds, *inter mortales inimicitias immortales.* between mortal men immortal Enmities. Yet the Prophet *Zechary* foretells, that such should be the Reception of the *Messiah*, the Entertainment that the *Prince of Peace* should find in the World, when he came to offer *Peace* to the World. And that he may set it off the more lively, he does it by way of Dialogue, shews it in a kind of *Drama*, or Acted Representation, introduces a Nameless Person to be astonish'd at the Strange Spectacle of an Ambassadors wounded, a publick Minister invaded like a publick Enemy; and the Person so used, giving as strange an account of his Usage, *viz.* that 'twas not on the Road, but in the City; not in the Camp, but in the House; again, not in the House of his Enemies, but in the House of his Allies and Friends. *And one shall say unto him, What are these Wounds in thy hands? Then shall he answer, Those with which I was wounded in the House of my Friends.*

I am not ignorant, that the Generality of Interpreters (a few only excepted) as well ancient as modern, apply these Words to the *False Prophet* mentioned *ver. 3.* and not to *Christ*: but though I affect not to follow the Few rather than the Many, yet I find it hard to resign a Picture so perfectly resembling our Lord, as my Text does, and allow it to be drawn for a *False Prophet*. I shall therefore shew upon what Considerations I have been induced to understand

understand the Words as I do, and if they are not convincing, content my self to handle them by way of Accommodation to the Business of the Day, though not by way of Interpretation.

In the first Verse of the Chapter, the Times of the *Messiah* are confessedly spoken of, *In that Day there shall be a Fountain opened to the house of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem for Sin and for Uncleanneſs.* In the five following Verses, the things transacted preparatory to the Coming of the *Messiah* are set down, viz. *the rooting Idolatry out of the Land of Israel, and the destroying of the False Prophets,* as at ver. 2. For God having for a time determined to silence all Prophecies, and to restrain all Miracles, that greater Notice might be taken of his Son when he came in the Power of both, with that *lumine prophetico*, which *Justin Martyr* says, *Christ* first kindled again after 'twas Extinguish'd; False Prophets from hence took occasion to arise, and having nothing Divine to countenance their pretended Mission from Heaven, they apishly imitated the Outward Garb and Austerity of the true Prophets, as 'tis ver. 4. *wore rough Garments, and used boldness of Speech.* But God not suffering these Impostors to frustrate his Divine Counsels, sent a Discerning Spirit into his People, and stir'd them up to bring them to con-dign Punishment, as at v. 3. *The very Father and Mother of the False Prophet shall thrust him through, and force him to confess that he spoke Lies, and that he was not sent by God, but was a Herdsman that had kept Cattel from his Youth.* And *Christ* at this Season entering on the Stage of *Judea* in a Mean and Poor Condition, far Unlike that Glorious and Warlike Prince that carnal Nation had fancy'd him, the Priests and Rulers set him at nought, and out of a pretence of Zeal

Zeal to God's Glory (as the faithful Jews had a little before laid hands upon the False Prophets) did the like on the Messiah, and crucifi'd him for an Impostor : as these things are imply'd partly in the Words of my Text, *What are these Wounds in thy hands, &c.* and partly in the Verse immediately following, *Awake, O Sword, against my Shepherd, against the Man which is my Fellow, says the Lord of Hosts, smite the Shepherd, and the Sheep shall be scattered.* Which last Words our Lord also applies to himself, *Matth. 26. 31.*

The Prophet *Zechary* recounting so close together the semblable Treating of these two most Unresembling Persons, *the Messiah and the False Prophets*, and shifting his Narration from the one to the other without any transition, has made it hard to distinguish which he speaks of : But in Prophetick Writings this Abruptness is common, as the Rabbins say, *lumen propheticum est lumen abruptum* : and *S^t Hierom*, *Non curæ fuit Spiritui prophetali Historiæ ordinem sequi*, the Spirit of Prophecy is not solicitous to observe Method, but despising all Historical and Logical Contextures, makes the *Exits* and *Intrats* of Persons in an unaccountable Manner. And such a Freedom it uses in this Chapter, that 'tis impossible rightly to apply the Particulars related to the Persons they belong, but by considering what was truly and indeed done to each of them. And by this Rule, *Piercing the Hands* plainly alludes to Crucifying, and must belong to the *Messiah*, this being a Punishment never practis'd among the *Jews*, till they fell under the *Roman Yoke*, Stoning being the Penalty of a False Prophet by the Law : and then, if we consider, Wounding the Hands, is not only a punishment differing from that prescribed, but also an Odd one that

that no way comports with the Crime, it being more sutable to the Offence, to have bored the Tongue of the False Prophet, than his Hands. But the truth is, the Prophet had exprest the Punishment of the False Prophet before, at the third Verse, namely, *by Thrusting him through*: which might be done *jure Zelotarum*, by the Right of Zealots, God exciting his own Relations against him. Or else the Punishment may refer to *Exod. 19. 12.* where God commands, *That if Man or Beast came within the forbidden Precincts of the holy Mount, they should be Thrust through with a Dart*: Our Prophet threatening here the same Death to those that, Uncall'd, invaded the Prophetick Office, which was threatned there to such as presumptuously intruded to pry into God's Mysterious and Dreadful Appearance. Which things being premis'd, I shall proceed to handle the Words as they are applicable to our Saviour: and so they contain in them two Great Mysteries of our Faith, which I shall explain, by enquiring

I. For what Reason the Divine Goodness so order'd it, That *Christ* our Saviour should be a Wounded Saviour, in satisfaction to this Question, *What are these Wounds in thy Hands?*

II. For what Reason the Divine Goodness so order'd it, That he should be wounded by those he deserved Best from, in exposition of these Words, *Those with which I was wounded in the House of my Friends.*

I begin with the First of these, Why *Christ* was to be

A Wounded Saviour.

What are these Wounds in thy Hands?] The Wounds in *Christ's* Hands do more particularly relate

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to the Wounds made by the Nails of the Cross, but by the Figure of a Part for the Whole, they may stand for the Wounds he received all his Body over; and not only so, but for all his Sufferings, whether in Body or in Spirit, from his Cradle to his Grave; from the Manger at *Bethlehem*, to his Crucifixion at Mount *Calvary*; and the Summ Total of this Question, (*What are these Wounds in thy Hands?*) imports no less, Than what is the meaning of thy Strange and astonishing Miseries, thy low Condition and sad Wants, thy perpetual Dangers and Persecutions? What is the meaning of thine Agony and bloody Sweat, thy Crown of Thorns platted and crusht into thy Head, thy being Mockt and Spit on? What is the meaning of thy Submitting not only to the Dishonours of a Humane Birth, but to those also of a Violent and Ignominious Death? Being the Son of God, why didst thou suffer any Evil? Why didst thou not convert the Stable in which thou wert Born into a Palace, and the Cross to which thou were Nail'd into a Throne? Why didst thou undergo such Miseries and Indignities as made the World doubt of thy Divine Nature, and not exert thy Deity, and destroy thy Murderers, and burn up their City, as thou spok'st in one of thy Parables? Thy People expected thee a mighty Prince, but thou shew'd'st thy self a Destitute, Forlorn Person; they lookt for a Deliverer, but behold one Obnoxious to Bonds and Death; for a Redeemer, but, Alas! none needed Redemption more himself.

Great, undoubtedly, and wonderful was the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God; and that he should not only be born in a Mortal, but in a Miserable Condition. The Apostle might well give it the precedence to all other Mysteries of Godliness, *Great is the Mystery*

Mystery of Godliness, says he, *God was manifested in the Flesh, justify'd in the Spirit, seen of Angels, &c.* But that *Christ* should suffer the things he did in our Nature, was no less Necessary, than Wonderful : And to omit all other Reasons for it, I shall insist only on that One Great One, *Because Sin could not otherwise have been abolisht*, the End, for which *Christ* came into the World, attain'd ; which was *To destroy the Works of the Devil*. *Christ* could have destroy'd the Devil with more Facility, if he had come in Majesty and Glory, as the Apostle says, *2 Thess. 2. He shall consume Anti-Christ with the Spirit (or breath only) of his Mouth, and the Brightness of his Coming*. But our Lord's Business at this time was not to destroy the Person, but the Power of the Devil : Sin was both the Stratagem by which he conquer'd, and the Chain by which he held Mankind in Captivity ; and *Christ* undertaking to rescue them from this Thralldom, to bind the Strong Man, and to take from him the Armour in which he trusted, he was not to do this by an Omnipotent Power, as he brought the World out of Nothing, Light out of Darkness, &c. but by an Heroick Vertue, such as he shew'd when he trampled upon the Temptations of the Devil in the Wilderness. He therefore enter'd the Lists against Satan as a Champion or Combatant, according to the fair Law of Armes, as they say, *i. e.* with a suitable Strength and Appointment to his Adversaries. Man was lost by Sin, and could only be restored by Righteousness ; he had forfeited God's Favour and his Felicity by his Transgressions, and could recover them again no other way but by Obedience. On this Account *Christ* laid by his Majesty and Glory, and took our Nature, that in the Infirmary of our Flesh he might foil our Strong Enemy ; the Second *Adam* re-

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deem the Glories lost by the First *Adam* ; the Seed of the Woman bruise the Serpents head ; made himself subject to the Law, that he might fulfil the Law ; obnoxious to Death, that he might subdue Death and the Author of it by suffering Death : as *St Paul* says, *Heb. 2. 14. That through Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil.* So that we see here was no place for Thunder and Lightning, for an O'er-bearing Irresistible Power, but only for Divine Graces or Vertues ; and the Weapons *Christ* used in this Conflict, were only Courage, Holiness, Obedience, Patience, Self-denial, Meekness, and the like, such as were in the Power of Men also to make use of ; he so conquer'd, as they might conquer after him. For the Great Business was not *Christ's* Personal Victory, that was secure, but the Victory of his Followers ; he indeed was to break the Power of the Kingdom of Darkness, but they were to compleat the Conquest, every one in his own Particular to subdue Sin and Satan.

And thus while *Christ* destroy'd the Power of the Devil, disarm'd him, and made those that had been his Slaves, Lords over him ; by consequence, and in a Political Sense, he destroy'd the Devil himself : as a Prince is said to be destroy'd, that is stript of his Forts and Castles, his Territories and Armies, his Ammunition and Harness of War, though his Person still survives. However then that *Zipporah* upbraided *Moses* upon the Circumcising of her Child, saying, *factus es mihi Sponsus sanguinum*, thou art to me a Bloody Husband : we have no reason to quarrel that *Christ* was to us *Salvator Sanguinum*, a Bloody Saviour, *i. e.* a Saviour drencht in his own Blood : for without the Blood of *Christ* there had been no Redemption.

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But to be more particular and distinct : There are two Ways by which *Christ* destroy'd the Power of the Devil, and delivered Mankind from his Bondage, and those are *Pretio & Exemplo*, by the Price or Satisfaction he paid for Sin, And by the Example of his Holy Life. By the first he destroy'd the Guilt of Sin, And by the second the Dominion or reigning Power of Sin.

1. Therefore we may say, There was a Necessity of *Christ's* Death and Sufferings, and that he should be a Wounded Saviour, that he might pay a Price, make Satisfaction to God the Father for the Sins of the World. For whether it be, that the Vindictive Justice of God for Sin be so natural and intimate to his Essence that he cannot, without renouncing his very Nature and Being, pardon Sin without a Competent Satisfaction, as some would have it : Or whether it be only his Declared Will not to pardon Sin without a Competent Satisfaction, as others, more suitably to the Divine Goodness and Glory, affirm, I shall not need here to dispute ; seeing both Sides agree in one and the same Conclusion, *That it was necessary for Christ to Dye for the Sins of the World. The Wages of Sin is Death*, says the Apostle : and in another place, *Almost all things by the Law were purged by Blood, and without shedding of Blood there was no Remission*. Now though the Blood there mentioned, was but the Blood of Beasts that were sacrificed : yet those Beasts were the Proxies and Representatives of Men, and also Types of the Great Sacrifice which *Christ* was once to offer on the Cross, and derived from it all their Vertue and Merit : and God revealed this Way of atoning by Sacrifice early to the World, and afterwards prescribed it to his People the *Jews* by written Laws, from whom it was deriv'd to all Nations :

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Nations: though the Mystery, that Sacrifices were founded in the Death of *Christ*, was not clearly understood till the Days of the Gospel. As a Remedy for Sin was promised from the Beginning, so 'twas also taught, however obscurely, from the very Beginning, That Sin was not to be abolished without Satisfaction made for it; and that no Competent Satisfaction could be made for it, but by the Blood of the Son of God, or the Eternal Destruction of the Sinner.

And if we will make the best Use of this Doctrine, we must observe, That as the Parts of the Body are framed in so excellent a manner, that they serve for more Uses than one: as the Nose not only to breathe, but to smell; the Hand not only to lay-hold with, but to strike, &c. So likewise that the Institution of Sacrifices for expiation of Guilt had two Excellent Designs in it: First, to shew God's Mercy to Sinners, and secondly, his Irreconcilable Hatred to Sin. And if we look no further in this Matter, than on God's Goodness only in accepting so favourable an Exchange, as the Blood of the Sacrifice, for the Blood of the Sinner, we defeat one half of his Design, which was to shew the Malignant and Mortiferous Nature of Sin, in that it could not be purged away by any less Means than Death; than either by the Destruction of the Sinner, or of some Other in his behalf. And therefore though God deal with us after that Royal Manner as the Children of Princes are dealt with, who have another Punishment for their Faults; or as he dealt with *David* after his Numbering the People, past by in a great measure his Offence, and took Occasion from it only to send a Plague on *Israel* for former Transgressions; thus chusing rather to punish *David's* Ingenuity, than his Person; to afflict him with beholding the Afflictions
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of others, than by sending any immediately on himself: yet if we shew not the like Ingenuity which *David* did, suffer not Our Selves, for what we see another suffer, when we were the Delinquents; I say, if as he cry'd out upon the Destruction of the People, *Lo, I have sinned, I have done Wickedly; but these Sheep, what have they done?* So if we cry not out, in Contemplation of what our Proxy suffered on our behalf, *We have sinned, we have done Wickedly, but the Lamb of God, what has he done to be sacrificed for us?* We shall forfeit both the Indulgence and Indemnity which God intended us, and while we shew our selves Insensible of so high a Benefit, we shall be deprived of it; and in the next place, we must Dye our Selves, and Dye to all Eternity.

And thus we see, as the *Death of Christ*, paid to God as a Ransom for Sins, ought to be the highest Object of our Joy: So the Consideration again on the other side, that Nothing but the *Death of Christ* could pay that Ransom, ought to create in us no less than a horror and Detestation of Sin. But yet, I know not how, we see men precipitately and remorselessly run into all Impiety, as if there were no danger in Sin; as if *Christ* had suffered nothing for it; as if it were as easily remitted, as 'tis committed; the Price of Iniquity no more than what it cost the Wicked Person to purchase it: For certainly, if Men did consider at how dear a Rate God's Justice and Wrath were satisfied, they would not think the gratifying of every Lust more valuable, than the Compensation made for it; they would not set more by the Savage Delight of Revenge, or the Swinish of Drunkenness, than by the Bloud of *Christ*; prefer the Favours of a Light Woman, before their Peace with God; a cheap Sin, before the dearest-bought Redemption.

Redemption. A Fool can work a Mischief, which may pose a Wiseman to remedy ; and every Weak Person, when he is tempted, can commit Sin, but none but the Eternal Son of God can remove the Guilt of it when 'tis done. And 'tis the light Reasoning that men make of Sin, which brings God's heavy Displeasure upon them for it ; their thinking so cheaply of the Greatest Offences, because the Pardon of them costs them little, that provokes him to make them feel what the Weight of Guilt is : For 'tis but just, that those who refuse to understand the pernicious Nature of Sin by the Punishment laid on an Other, should understand it by undergoing the Punishment of it themselves ; who will not learn how Odious it is to God by the Death of his Son, should be taught it by their own Confusion. Who is there so Ungrateful and Insensible even among the Worst of Men, that if a Friend hazard his Life for his Preservation, will not acknowledge so great a Benefit ? and yet the Son of God did not only hazard, but lay down his Life to redeem us from Eternal Damnation, and few there are that consider it, that have so much Compassion, as but to ask the Question in my Text, *What are these Wounds in thy hands ?* resentingly to say, *Was it possible so Divine a Person should be so Abus'd for me ? that the Son of God, should be buffeted, spit on, derided, torn with Scourges, mangled with Tortures, and at last nail'd to the Cross, for my Disobedience ?* There are those, I confess, in the Church of Rome who spend a great Part of their Lives in gazing on a Crucifix, and weeping over the Pictures of our Lord's Passion, in bemoaning his Sufferings, and kissing the Representations of his Wounds : but, alas, these do but *herere in cortice*, stick at the Bark and Husk of the Mystery, out

out of a simple or affected Fondness express their Gratitude to *Christ* a Wrong Way, lament his Sufferings now they are past, and he in Glory at the Right Hand of his Father ; they do not penetrate into the true Purpose and Meaning of his Sufferings, as they declare the Malignant Nature of Sin, that could not be expiated at a less Rate than the Death of so Divine a Person : For this is the true Return that Men should make *Christ* for his Passion, not so much to consider What his Wounds were, as For what they were, and from thence fly that which was the Cause of his Sufferings.

The second Reason of the Necessity of *Christ's* Sufferings, I said, was, To give Men an Example of Obedience. The Apostle, *Heb. 2. 17.* gives another Reason for *Christ's* suffering in our Nature, *viz. that he might be a Merciful High Priest, become Compassionate of our Infirmities by the Experimental Knowledge of them in his Own Person.* But the Reason or Purpose I now speak of, is such as is in Reference to Men, and not to himself ; that he might give an Example to the World, that God commanded nothing but what was possible to be performed by Flesh and Bloud. The last Effort or Endeavour of Heaven to bring Men to Salvation was now essaying, and the shortest and most Efficacious Motive was thought to be, to give them an Instance of the Fulfilling the Law : Precepts are but cold Inducements ; but an Example fires the Soul with Emulation to do, what it sees done before it ; and Men think it a Disparagement to give out in that, which another has enterpriz'd with Success. The Life of a Christian is full of Difficulties and Troubles, many Lusts are to be mortifi'd, many Affections to be rectifi'd, many Vices to be rooted out, and many Vertuous Habits to be

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acquir'd, which things are not Easie even to the best of Men; again, Persecutions and Evils, loss of Goods, of Liberty, and Life it self, are the Lot often of the most Righteous, and for their Righteousness: So that there was need of a Great Encouragement and a Generous Precedent to excite Men to undertake the Heroick Duties of Christianity. God therefore afforded them his Own Son clothed in our Nature to go before them; his Own Son, I say, to add the Greater Authority to his Example; and cloathed in our Flesh, to remove all Objections which Sloth might otherwise make against the Possibility of following his Steps. *I am not Equal*, says one, *to the Burdens and Dangers required in a Christian Life, able to undergo Imprisonment, Beggary, Martyrdom, &c.* Behold my Hands and my Feet, says Christ, *these Wounds I suffered for thy Salvation, and canst not thou, who art framed of the same Flesh and Blood, endure as much for thy Self, as another could endure for thee?* Says another, I cannot digest Injuries and Affronts, my Temper, my Profession of Life, are inconsistent with these things. *Learn of me*, says Christ, *I am lowly and meek, and when I was enthron'd in the highest Heavens, I disdained not to descend into this World in the form of a Servant, and to bear Indignities and Outrages, when the Wisdom of God so order'd it, and well then mayst thou submit to the like, whose Original is but from the Earth.* These things are too plain to be long insisted on: let thus much suffice to be said in Satisfaction to this Question, *What are these Wounds in thy Hands?* viz. they signifie first *Malum culpæ*, the Evil Demerit of Sin, which Christ suffered, that we might be excused. Secondly *Malum pænæ*, the Toleration of Evil, which Christ underwent to leave us an Example to follow him. I proceed to shew,
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For what Reason the Divine Wisdom so order'd it, that *Christ* should be wounded by those he deserved Best from, in Explanation of these Words,

Those with which I was wounded in the House of my Friends.

Of whom do the Kings of the Earth take Tribute ? says *Christ*, Of their Children, or of Strangers ? Not of their Children, but of Strangers. So again, *Who are those Men usually Wound and Kill, their Friends, or their Enemies ?* certainly, not their Friends, but their Enemies : Yet so it was, that the *Messiah* was wounded and murdered by his Own Nation and Kindred. The Gentiles bore him no Malice, *Herod* laid nothing to his Charge, *Pilate* would have set him free, *Am I a Jew ?* says he, *thine own Nation, and the Chief Priests have delivered thee unto me :* all Strangers honoured him : but as *S^t John* says, *He came unto his Own, and his Own received him not. Received him not*] is a *Meiosis*, or mitigated Expression for the Worst of Usages, they Persecuted him with the highest Malice and Hatred, the more to disgrace him, they hung him between two Thieves, and put him to Death in their Capital City. But though the Nation of the Jews were not his Friends *de facto*, yet they are so called, because they ought to have been his Friends *de jure* ; for they were his Compatriots and Kindred, he chose to be born of their Stock before any other, he preacht the Gospel to them first, made *Palestine* the Scene of his Holy Life and Miracles, design'd their whole Nation the Honour of being his Apostles at large, to be the Preachers of Salvation to the rest of the World ; and by how much the more they ought to have been his Friends for these Ob-

ligations, the more unpardonable was their Barbarity, not only to make him so Strange a Spectacle, as Saint Paul says himself was made, *Legatus in vinculis, an Ambassadour in Bonds*, but also *Legatus cum vulneribus*, an Ambassadour wounded and crucified. What Malice, besides the *Jews*, was ever so Great, as to destroy so much Vertue and Goodness? What Envy so black and rancorous to persecute so much Meekness and Humility? What Wickedness ever so unfortunate and unhappy, as to cut off the Saviour of their Nation and of the World, to the Salvation of others, and to their own only Destruction? It appears at first hearing, the most Mysterious and unaccountable, the most Strange and amazing Event, that ever the Wisdom of God produced in the World, That he should permit his Own People, of all the People of the Earth, to be the Murderers of his Son! *Acts 2. 23.* says St Peter, *Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.* But the wonder of this will vanish, as soon as the Reason appears; for if we consider the Blindness and Hardness of the Jews Hearts after so many Glorious Revelations; their Uncorrigible Lives under so many holy Laws; their high Ingratitude after so many Benefits; Who deserved to be condemned to such a Prodigious Punishment, but those who were the Greatest Prodigies of Stubbornness and Impiety? From this wonderful and dreadful Judgment of God, I shall reflect upon two things for our Edification.

First, The Wickedness of Mens Hearts, when they are void of the Spirit of Grace: For upon such no Reason, no Benefits, no Miracles, whether of Power or Goodness, can effect any thing: but those very Means and Endeavours which are employed for their
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Salvation, serve only for their greater Obduration ; those that are their chiefest Friends, and of whom it may be said, as of the Apostles, *These Men are the Servants of the most High God, which shew the Way of Salvation*, if they rebuke them for their Sins, seek to instruct their Ignorance, or to confute their Folly, they will look upon them as the Worst of Enemies.

Am I become your Enemy, says St Paul, *because I tell you the Truth* ? Yes, Blessed Apostle, there's nothing more certain, nothing turns Friends sooner into Foes than an Unwelcome Truth : they that will not be reformed, will not be taught ; and to instruct one that loves his Sins, is like the bringing a Candle upon him, when he is retir'd to commit it. And 'tis observable in all times, that those Persons who, mov'd by an Heroick Piety, have attempted to reform the Errours and Vices of a Nation, have found as hostile a Reception, as those who have sought to Enslave it ; men defending their long-wedded Opinions as passionately, as their Riches ; their Hereditary Corruptions, as their Hereditary Country. In the Parable in which our Lord set forth his own Ill Success in seeking to convert Sinners, when he liv'd upon the Earth, he introduces certain Husbandmen, saying, *Come, this is the Heir, let us kill him, and the Inheritance shall be our own*. For such was the Consultation of the Sanhedrim or principal Council of the Jews concerning him. Come, let us rid our selves of this Pretended Messiah, this bold Reprover of our Vices, and Confuter of our Traditions no less by Miracles than by Reason, and then we shall continue to sit in *Moses's Chair*, lead the People as we please, and none will dare to contradict us. If we will not shew our selves such *Friends to Christ*, as my Text speaks of, who stain'd their hands
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in his Blood, let us with all Submission of Soul, and Singleness of Heart embrace his Doctrines, and pay Obedience to his Precepts, whether they relate to Faith or to Manners; and suffer neither Pleasure, nor Profit, Reputation among Men, or any By-Respect whatsoever to disaffect us to him: For the things of this World are at Enmity with Christ, and if we set our Affections upon them, they will lead us from the Worship of the True God, as the *Canaanitish* Wives did the *Israelites*, to worship Idols, and the worst of Idols, even themselves: Christ himself will appear to us a Deceiver, and we shall sooner rescue *Barabbas* from the Cross, than him. And let none in these days, who have received the Knowledge of the Truth, and after extinguish'd the Grace of God in their Hearts by fulfilling the Lusts of the Flesh, flatter themselves as the *Jews* did, who said, *If we had lived in the Days of Old, we would not have been Partakers of the Blood of the Prophets*: So if we had liv'd in *Christ's* days, we would not have used him, as the *Jews* did: for this is but a *Pharisaical Deception*, those that hate *Christ's* Gospel, would have shew'd but little Kindness to his Person; who crucifie him now by their Wicked Lives, would not have spared his very Life, if they had liv'd in his days. *Idem qua idem semper efficit idem*; the same thing dispos'd in the same Manner, will produce the same Effect; the same Corruption in the Heart will always bring forth the same Wickedness in the Hands.

The second Reflection I shall make upon *Christ's* being wounded in the House of his Friends, Is the Part which God performed, after the *Jews* added this Great Wickedness of murdering the *Messiah*, to all their former Impieties: For if we look on the Reverse of the Coin, as I may say, the Vengeance God sent

sent upon them, we shall find it stamp'd in as deep and legible Characters, as their Wickedness was engraven on the other Side; it being no less than the utter Rejection and Ruine of their Nation, and with such Tragical Circumstances, as are in no Story to be parallel'd: but they are so generally known, that I shall spend no time to dilate on them, but rather exhort all such, who after the manifold Admonitions and frequent Warnings of God, still persist in their Sins, and are deaf and incorrigible to all his Invitations to Repentance, to consider, How for the like Refractoriness and Hardness of Heart God suffered his Own People to proceed from Wickedness to Wickedness, till they arriv'd at last *in profundum malorum*, into such a Gulph of Perdition, that if the most Desperate among them had seen the End of their Rebellious Ways, at their first setting-out in the Course of them, they would have started back with Horrour at the Prospect. The 2^d Kings 5. we read, that when the Prophet *Elisba* foretold to *Hazael* (yet a Private Person, and unacquainted with his own Temper) what Immanities and Cruelties he would commit, when he came to be King of *Assyria*, that *he would butcher Men, rip up Women with Child, dash Infants against the Stones, &c.* He answer'd, *But what! is thy Servant a Dog, that I should do these things?* And the very Scribes and Pharisees, who were the Chief Actors in this Days Tragedy, when our Lord insinuated to them (in the Parable I late mentioned of the Husbandmen consulting to kill the Heir) *that they would be his Murderers, and by it pull certain Destruction on their Nation*, they reply'd, *God forbid;* Not only deprecating the Punishment, but detesting the Crime. The raw Novice-Sinner knows not at first to what a Villain, to what a Devil he will grow:
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Men ought therefore to fear the first Motions of Sin, and to suppress the Beginnings of Wickedness, if for no other Reason but this, Lest they become Worse than they could have imagined it possible for them to have been. Who allows himself at first only to Overreach his Brother, by degrees will take from him by Violence or Open Robbery; who makes no Scruple to be Factious and Seditious, will hardly stop till he arrives at Rebellion and Treason; who indulges himself at first in a Negligent Irreverent Performance of God's Service, and makes the Church the Scene of his Vanity, and not of his Devotion, is in the ready Path to proceed from Prophaneness to Atheism. But as Sin encreases, we have heard that Vengeance also ripens and Encreases; says our Lord, *Whoever falls on this Stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to Powder.* The first Sins a man commits, dangerously wound his Soul, they dash against *Christ*, as an Earthen Vessel does against a Rock; but Presumption and Obstinacy in Sinning causes *Christ* to fall upon the Sinner, as a Rock upon an Earthen Vessel, which is sure to crush it to Dust.

To conclude: Though we that are here present, are not of the House of *Christ's* Friends, *i. e.* of his Kindred and Nation: yet we have a Nearer and more Excellent Relation to him, in that we are of the Household of Faith, and of the Family of his Church; as himself declared, when he stretcht forth his Hand to his Disciple, saying, *Behold my Mother and my Brethren; for whoever shall do the Will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Mother, my Sister, and my Brother.* Now, if we in our Spiritual Relation shall by our Sins crucifie *Christ* in his Glory, as his Kindred according to the Flesh nail'd him to the Cross when he liv'd on Earth, our Wickedness will
far

The Fifth Sermon.

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far exceed theirs ; as the Wickedness of a Disciple far exceeds that of an Unbeliever ; the Wickedness of *Judas*, did that of *Pontius Pilate* and *Caiaphas*. It is our Unspeakable Happiness, that *Christ* was Wounded for us, but it will be our Unexcusable Impiety, if he be wounded by us ; 'tis again our Strange Felicity, that when Others slew him, we reap the Benefit of his Death ; when the *Husbandmen Kill'd the Heir*, that we inherit the Vineyard. And if we make that faithful Use of *Christ's* Death which we ought, while the *Jews* bear the Guilt of his Blood, we shall be purged by it from all our Transgressions ; and while Eternal Infamy and Wrath cleaves to them, Eternal Glory and Felicity shall be our Portion ; which God of his Infinite Mercy, through our Lord *Jesus Christ*, grant to us.

*And to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
be ascribed all Honour, Glory, &c. Amen.*

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1. The first of the three
is the one which is
the most common and
the most important
of the three. It is
the one which is the
most common and the
most important of the
three.

2. The second of the three
is the one which is
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of the three. It is
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3. The third of the three
is the one which is
the most common and
the most important
of the three. It is
the one which is the
most common and the
most important of the
three.

4. The fourth of the three
is the one which is
the most common and
the most important
of the three. It is
the one which is the
most common and the
most important of the
three.

5. The fifth of the three
is the one which is
the most common and
the most important
of the three. It is
the one which is the
most common and the
most important of the
three.

The Sixth Sermon.

ROMANS viii. II.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

IF the Resurrection of *Christ* had been of his Person only, it would have been a rare and glorious Event, but an Event of no Concern to us ; and if we did meet only this Day to celebrate his Resurrection from the Dead, and not our Own that shall be, though we celebrated a Great Miracle, we should not celebrate a Great Benefit. But *St Paul* teaches us in my Text, how we may be assured to commemorate our own Resurrection, as well as *Christ's*, namely, *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in us.*

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Those whom the Spirit does not inhabit in this Life, when they dye, they dye for ever : but they on the other side in whom it dwells and inhabits now, the Resurrection of *Christ* is not to them a History, but a Precedent ; and such Persons shall not be only Admirers, but themselves Partakers of the Miracle. *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the Dead shall also quicken, &c.*

To look further into this Mystery, and the Expedient propos'd to bring this Wonderful thing to pass, I shall observe in the Words these three Particulars :

I. *What it is for the Spirit of God (or, which is all one, of him that raised up Jesus from the dead) to dwell in us.*

II. The Effect or Consequence of such In-dwelling of the Spirit of God, viz. if it be in a Man, *He that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall raise up his Mortal Body.*

III. By what Means God will produce this Effect in such a Man, even by that which dwelleth in him, — *by his Spirit that dwelleth in him.*

I. *What it is for the Spirit of God to dwell in a man.*

The Spirit of him that raised up *Jesus* from the Dead is no other, than the Eternal Spirit of God, the third Person in the Trinity, the Spirit which is mentioned in *Genesis*, that in the beginning of the World gave Life to all things, is the same Spirit that still gives the *Palingenesis*, the second *Genesis*, or Regeneration : whether we understand the Word of the Change and Renovation of our Soul and Affections

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to the Will of God in this Life, or the Resuscitation of the Body from the Grave in the next, and the Re-uniting it with the Soul in order to Eternal Bliss.

The Spirit is said here to be the Spirit [*Of God*] but not the Spirit [*In God*:] as if it dwelt in God, as it dwells in us : it is in God Personally and Essentially, as his Being, but 'tis in us only by way of Tenancy, as an Inhabitant or Inmate, to excite in us its Gifts and Graces. And this may serve to refute and silence those deceived Souls, who of late times, through their misunderstanding of the Union of the Saints with God exprest in Scripture, have run into such high-flown and horrible Blasphemies, as to say, They are *In-Godded in God*, and *In-Christed in Christ* : thus claiming Prerogative, instead of Privilege ; and affirming Divinity, instead of a Divine Spirit, to be in them ; supposing themselves to be inspired even *Essentially with the Divine Nature*. But such Blasphemous Conceits as these, so audacious and injurious to the Deity, are so far from being Effects of God's Spirit, which is the Principle of Eternal Life in those it dwells, that they are Demonstrations of the Spirit of *Satan*, an *Affectation to be like the Most High*, and *to equal their Maker*, and unrepented of will certainly consign them to have a Portion with him in Eternal Death : for what the *Jews* blindly objected against our Lord as a Crime, *That being but a Man, he made himself God*, may be justly charged on these, that being indeed but Men, and commonly but the Dreggs of Men, they fanstie themselves to be Gods : Only the Sin of these is more unpardonable, in regard that after so long a time, and so much warning of the like Miscarriage in this kind, they have not exploded this old worn out Stratagem of *Satan's*. But though this Diabolical Frenzy must be

be abhorr'd, yet when 'tis said that the Spirit of God dwells in a Man, we must look upon it as denoting something more Extraordinary and Excellent, than the common Lodging or Abiding of an Inhabitant in a House; as representing rather God's Residence in his Temple at *Jerusalem*: which Temple as it was Splendid and Glorious with all that Art and Cost could make it, a Representation of Heaven, so God by wonderful Tokens and Testimonies declared his Divine Presence in it. And after this manner the Heart of every Christian ought to be embellish'd with Vertue, and sanctified like a Temple, appear like a little Heaven upon Earth, in which the Holy Spirit may be seen to dwell by shewing his Divine Operations. *Know ye not, says St Paul, that your Bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost? Solomon built God but one Material House, but Christ by his Spirit has raised to God as many Living Temples on Earth, as there are Believers.*

But to be more particular: Dwelling in a House implies three things. 1. Legitimate Possession by Legal Title and Introduction. 2. Command and Dominion. 3. Residence or Mansion. And all these Properties the In-dwelling of the Spirit of God ought to have in those, whom it hereafter quickens to Everlasting Life.

1. The Spirit must have *Legitimate Introduction and Possession*. God dwelt not in his Temple at *Jerusalem*, till it was Dedicated and consecrated to him, till he was introduced into it by Supplications and Sacrifices. And his Holy Spirit will not dwell in Mens Hearts, till they be dedicated and consecrated to him by Baptism, and he be introduced by Prayer, and Vows of Faith and Repentance, *Ephes. 3. 17.* *St Paul beseeches God, that he would grant to the Ephesians, according*

according to the riches of his Glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the Inner-Man, that Christ may dwell in their Hearts by Faith. They that by Faith in Christ do not unite themselves unto him, and so receive of his Spirit, have not yet introduced the Spirit into its Temple: and they that recede again from the Faith after they have received it, dislodge and thrust the Holy Spirit out of his Tenure and Occupation. The Jews reckoned that God was still among them, as before, when they had rejected and crucified the Holy One: but after such their Infidelity and Wickedness he remained no more in their Hearts, than he did in their Material Temple, after that Voice was heard to come out of it, *migremus hinc*, let us depart hence. Wheresoever it is so, That either Men believe not on the Son of God, or else having believed on him, through the Allurements of the World and the Flesh fall back again into Unbelief, and chuse rather to dispossess his Spirit, than their Sins and Lusts, there no Quickening Power will be found to revive their Mortal Bodies at the last Day: for where the Spirit it self is not, its Operations cannot be expected. 'Tis true indeed, that Sinners and Infidels shall rise again, as St Paul says, *Acts 24. 15. There shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just, and Unjust.* Those that crucified Christ in the days of his Flesh, and those that crucifie him by their Wicked Lives now in his Glory, shall rise no less than True Believers, than his holy Apostles and Martyrs: But how, and to what Resurrection shall they rise? Even to such a Resurrection as is no other than a Second and Worse Death, a Death not of Extinction or annihilation, but a Death of Eternal Duration in Torment; Non-Existence being not the State of the Second Death, but Endless and Insupportable Misery: infomuch

insomuch that they shall wish, that the Grave had for ever swallowed them up; that as they liv'd like the Beasts that perish, so they had also dyed like them, without the Expectation of any After-Being. So that the Resurrection of the Wicked is but an *Æquivocal Resurrection*: as the lifting up of the Head of *Pharaoh's* Baker on the Gallows, and the hanging *Haman* fifty Cubits high, were but *Æquivocal Advancements*. The Bodies of the Saints that rose after the Passion, dy'd again the same Death; but those that shall rise at the Last Day, not having the Spirit, shall dye again, not the same Death (that would be a Happiness) but a Death that shall have no End; and the Miseries of which we can no more describe, than we can the Joys of Eternal Life: but we must suffer a Change, and be endued with new Powers and Faculties, before we can support the Bliss of the one, or the Torments of the other.

The second Property of an Inhabitant or Dweller in a House, is to *Command and Rule*. 'Tis the Saying of every man to those that withstand the Exercise of their just Authority, or but their Civility, *Give me leave to Command in my own House*. The Spirit of God must Rule and Command where it dwells; we must not only give it House-room, but Dominion; look upon him as a Tenant, but revere as our Land-Lord, resign our Actions, Wills, Affections, the Whole Man to his Dispose and Guidance. Faith invites the Holy Ghost, but Obedience and Submission to his Gracious Motions perfumes his Habitation, and makes him delight to stay in it. The Spirit of Love, Meekness, Purity, and Holiness, will not reside, but where these and the like Vertues bear the Sway. *Let the Word of Christ*, says *S^t Paul*, *dwell in you Richly in all Wisdom*: So let the Spirit of God dwell

dwell in you Richly in all Wisdom : it will not Cohabit with the Sons of Men, unless it be Richly, *i. e.* in the Abundance of its own Divine Graces and Operations. If we will have the Spirit of God quicken our Mortal Bodies hereafter, we must suffer him to quicken our Souls in this Life ; if we hope to reign by his Power in the World to come, we must submit to his Dominion in this present World.

The third Property is *Residence and Mansion* ; our Houses are called our Manours and Places, *i. e.* the Places where we ordinarily abide, and where the Law presumes we are to be found : so that if a Writ be delivered to any of the Household, or but fastned to the Ring of the Door, 'tis counted the same thing as if given into our hands. Thus our Hearts must be the Holy Spirit's Manour or Place : for what *David* says of God's constant Abode in his Temple on Mount *Sion*, *This is the Hill which God delights to dwell in, yea the Lord will dwell in it for ever* : the like must be said of the constant Abode of the Holy Spirit in our Hearts, This is the Habitation of the Holy Spirit, and if we grieve him not, nor drive him away by our Sins, he will delight to dwell in us for ever. When we were devoted to God in Baptism, we devolved and made-over to his Holy Spirit an Estate in our Hearts, even the Whole Term we had to live in this World : and if we make good this Grant or Demise, he will never abandon his Tenements, till he has raised them up to Eternal Glory. The Reason that a Great Schole-Man gives, Why God punishes the Sins of Men, which were but Temporal, with an Eternity of Torments, is, *Quia peccaverunt in suo eterno*, because they sinn'd out all the Eternity they had, *i. e.* all the Time God allowed them in this World ; and had he continued their Lives to the End

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of all Ages, they would have continued still the same Wicked Persons. The like Reason may be given for God's rewarding the Temporal Obedience of the Righteous with Eternal Glory, *Quia obedientes fuerunt in suo eterno*, because they were Obedient all that little Eternity he allowed them in this World, and would have persever'd in their Obedience if he had drawn out their Lives to the last Period of Time. Abiding and Persevering in Righteousness is that which will give us Immortality : if we give up the Possession of our Souls to the Dispose and Conduct of the Blessed Spirit the *Whole Little Æternum* we have in this World, we shall certainly obtain an *Eternity*, *that shall have no end in the next*. And thus I have shew'd the Manner of the Spirit's Dwelling in every Christian : and they that pretend to his *In-dwelling* without these *Properties*, boast of an *In-mate* which they have not ; and as they want this Divine Guest, so they will want the Blessed Effects and Consequence of his inhabiting in them, the quickning of their Mortal Bodies at the last Day to Glory. Which is the second thing I propos'd to explain,

*The Effect or Consequence of the Spirit's dwelling
in us.*

If the Spirit dwell in you, He that raised up Jesus from the Dead, shall quicken your Mortal Bodies. The Words suggest two things to our Consideration :

1. What shall be done to such Persons in whom the Spirit dwells, *He shall quicken their Mortal Bodies.*
2. Who shall be the Author to effect or bring this to pass, *He that raised up Jesus from the Dead.*

1. What shall be done to such Persons in whom the Spirit dwells. 'Tis said, *He shall quicken their Mortal*

Mortal Bodies. Our Bodies are Mortal three Ways; by *Natural Death*, the Dissolution of the Substance of them; by *Eternal Death*, which succeeds the Natural, that Riddle of a Death, which by its Existence is in truth a Life, but by the Torments belonging to it may deservedly be called a Death; and by *Spiritual Death*, which is the Cause of the other two. Now our Mortal Bodies may be quicken'd or reviv'd again to three Lives; To a *Life of Eternal Duration*; to a *Life of Eternal Joy*; and to a *Spiritual Life*, or a Life of Grace, which is the Cause in us of the other two Lives. Some understand these Words [*shall quicken our mortal bodies*] only of Spiritual Profelytism, of the raising us from the Death of Sin, and the enlivening us to a Life of Grace. But though this meaning suits well with *S^t Paul's* Design in this Epistle, to confute the Imagination of the *Jews*, that they could obtain Eternal Life by Virtue of the Law of *Moses*, without Faith in *Christ*: Yet the Words of my Text point at the *Blessed Immortality* the Righteous shall hereafter be Partakers of, and are only to be understood after this manner: *If Christians give themselves up to be led and governed by the Spirit of God in this World* (which is the Spirit that raised up *Jesus*) *they in like manner shall be raised up by it at the Last Day*; and the more they are quickned to a Life of Grace here, the more they may be assured they shall be quickned to the Life of Glory hereafter.

Many Practical Uses and Advantages might be inferred from hence: but I shall collect only this one, which may be of great Encouragement to our Christian Industry and Endeavours to lead a Godly Life, and that is the Expedition we shall make towards the attaining the Unspeakable Rewards of the Kingdom

of Heaven. There are three Lives to be attained, and all to be attained by the Well-Ordering of One, of our Spiritual Life alone in this World : if we rise from the Death of Sin to Newness of Life, we shall attain by the same Performance three Resurrections, to that of perfect Grace, to that of perfect Time or Duration, and to that of perfect Joy and Glory. This I say is so rich a Harvest, and to be purchas'd with such Expedition, that the Nicest and most impatient of Toil and Difficulties may be encouraged to strive for it. *Happy is he, says St John, that has a share in the first Resurrection, i. e. in the Life of Grace :* for the other are but Corollaries or Additional Complements of this : Sanctification is as certain and assured a Way to Glorification, as Childhood is the Way to Manhood ; 'tis the Inchoation or Beginning of it, and in a sense may be said to be it. *Those whom he Justify'd, says St Paul, those he also Glorify'd :* as if these were done together, and not in process of Time. But to proceed.

The Author, secondly, of this Grace and Bounty is God. And why did not the Apostle express himself so in a Word, but used this Circumlocution, [*He that raised up Jesus from the dead ?*] Because since *Christ's* coming in the Flesh, and having performed the Work of our Salvation, God has left off to govern in the Church immediately by himself, and does all things by and through our Lord Jesus Christ. God Created and Drowned the World, and wrought all the other wonderful things we read of in the Old Testament, *in his Own Name, as God :* But now under the Gospel he dispenses all his Mercies *as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and we must expect the Gift of Grace, the Pardon of Sin, Resurrection to Eternal Life, and all his other Blessings and Favours,
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from his Relation to his Son. It is indeed by the Power of God that all men shall be raised from the Dead : but then it is again for the Merits sake of *Christ*, and their Believing in him, that they shall be raised to Glory. And that we should take notice of the Change of his Name in the New Testament, from that he delighted to be called by in the Old, is his own Will and Pleasure. Says he there, *By my name Jehovah I will be known* : but now to us, *by the Name of his Relation to his Son, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The *Manichees* from the Mistake of some Passages and Observations like this raised their detestable Heresie, That the God of the Old Testament, and the God of the New were two Different Persons ; the Father of Christ another God from the Creator of the World ; who sent his Son in the Flesh with a Design to win men from the Creator of the World. But these are Wicked and Impious Dotages : 'tis only an Other Name that God has taken, 'tis not an Other God that acts among us : there is but One God from and to all Eternity, *whose Name be Blessed for ever*. The meaning of the Scripture is only to teach us, That 'tis not God, *quatenus* God, that we expect should quicken us at the Last Day, but God as *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And this manifests the Perverseness of the *Jews*, who still adhere to *Moses* and the Synagogue for their hopes of Salvation : and the Blindness also of those, who perswade themselves they can please God and attain Heaven by Natural and Moral Performances, without Faith in Christ : But the time permits me not to insist on these things. I haste therefore to my last Particular, The Means by which God will quicken our Mortal Bodies at the last Day, *viz.*

By

By his Spirit that dwelleth in us.

This Particle [By] in the Original [$\Delta\iota\alpha$] does not infer any Means that God shall use as Instrumental for the quickening our Mortal Bodies, but implies here, and in many other places, the Motive only or Reason that invites the Agent to perform an Action. God will raise us from the Dead, as he does all his other Works, by his Word or Omnipotent Power: but though his Power does the thing, yet 'tis for something in Men that invites him to do it, namely, his Holy Spirit; which he gave them to that very End and Purpose to dispose and fit them for the receiving Eternal Life. *David* says of himself immediately, and *Christ* typically, and of all Faithful People mystically, *Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see Corruption, i. e.* God will not leave or forsake the Righteous either in their Life or Death, as if he had forgotten them, and the Motive of this his Favour to them is, Because they are *Righteous, or Holy Ones*. And the Psalmist expresses the thing with some Indignation, and as if it were an injury to God to imagine, that he could suffer in his very Nature, that that which was Holy should be swallowed up in the Grave, that which was Righteous should perish, that which was Incorruptible, should see Corruption. And indeed there is not only an Incongruity, but an Impossibility, that this should be: For what the Apostle says of *Christ's* Resurrection, *God raised him up, having loosed the Pains or Bands of Death, because it was possible he should be held of them:* may be said of the Resurrection of all the Faithful, with this Difference only, That the Impossibility of *Christ's* being detain'd in the Grave proceeded from his *Divine*

The Sixth Sermon.

III

vine Nature, ours from a *Divine Promise* : Nay, we may add, and with good Warrant, That the Impossibility of our remaining in the Grave depends not only on an *External Promise*, but on Something *With-in our selves, though not Of our selves*, even on the Spirit of God which dwelleth in us ; by which we are united to *Christ*, and made Members of his Body, he being the Head ; and our Resurrection must necessarily be a Consequence of his by the very Law, as I may say, of the Body, or the Inseparable Conjunction of the Limbs to one another : for it is not possible that the Head should be quickened, and the Body mortified : that the Head should be raised to Life, and crowned with Glory, and the Members remain in Death and Dishonour. And 'tis on this account that *Christ* is said *To be the First-fruit of those that Sleep* : and not only in regard that none went before him, but the First-fruit in relation to them that were to follow after him. The First-fruits in the Law, were Part of the Fruits of the Season, one Sheaf of the Harvest, which being lift-up and consecrated to God in the Name of the rest, sanctified the Whole Crop : So *Christ* being lift up as the First-fruit of the Dead, consecrated and sanctified the Whole Harvest of the Dead. And, as Saint *John* says of every true Believer in point of Impeccability, *He cannot Sin, because the Seed of God abideth in him ; i. e.* none can be a Child of God's, and a customary Sinner, for these are irreconcilable : So we may affirm with unspeakable Comfort in the point of our Immortality, A true Believer cannot be held in Death, because God's Seed abideth in him, *i. e.* Death, and a Seed or Principle of Immortality are inconsistent with one another.

And

The Sixth Sermon.

And thus we see we have not only *Matter of Congratulation* for *Christ's* Victory over Death and the Grave, but the highest *Cause of Jubilee* and Rejoycing for our own Deliverance from this heavy Curse and Punishment of Sin. As Sin subjected us to the Dominion of Death, the Spirit of Sanctification breaks the Bonds of the Tyrant asunder, and enables us to conquer this Conquerour of Mankind; as Disobedience shut the Gates of Heaven against us, Obedience sets them open again; Holiness of Life in the Faith of *Christ* in this World, is the Ticket whereby we receive Happiness and Immortality in that to come. The Young Phoenix is said to spring out of the perfum'd Ashes and Reliques of the Old: but though this be never so fabulous, I am sure we shall be renewed and quickned to Eternal Life, from the perfum'd Reliques of a Holy Life, the remaining Good Works and Graces the Spirit of God wrought in us; which, as *S^t John* says, can never dye, but will follow us into the other World. If therefore we give our selves up to be led and governed by the Spirit of *Christ* in this Life, conform our selves in all things to his Divine Will; if the Spirit of *Christ* conducts us safely, to use the Psalmist's Expression, *through Fire and Water* (i. e. through the Sharper Tryals of Afflictions, and the Softer Allurements and Temptations of the Flesh and the World) he will carry us also safe through the Regions of Death and the Grave, pass us indemnified by the Gates of Hell, and neither the Malice of Devils, the Weight of our Tomb-Stone, the Load of our Flesh, or the yet greater Load of our Infirmities shall hinder, but our Bodies shall be raised, and so winged, that they shall overtake their Souls,

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Souls, and be joined to them, that took their Flight so long a time before them, and both of them together shall be transported in Triumph to Heaven, and crown'd with Immortality and Glory ; the Assurance and Pledge of which *Christ* has given us this Day in his own Resurrection.

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, Worship, and Thanksgiving, this Day forth and for evermore. Amen.

Q

The

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The Seventh Sermon.

PSALM ii. 6.

*Yet have I set my King upon my holy
Hill of Sion.*

Wisdome does not only do her Works well, but perceives that she does so, delights in their Beauty, exults in remembrance of the master'd difficulty, and triumphs over the conquer'd Opposition: Thus God stood-off, as 'twere, from his great work of the Creation when he had finish'd it, applauded, and bless'd it; prided himself, as I may say, in his noble performance; in that he had brought Light out of Darkness, Order out of *Chaos*, a World out of nothing. In the like manner, when he had here compos'd the *Distracti-
ons* and *Confusions* both in the Church and State of *Israel*, by establishing *David* literally, and *Christ* mystically, on the Throne of the Kingdom, he glories in having brought about his great Design; laughs at the fruitless Opposition of his Adversaries at home

Q 2

and

and abroad, of the *Philistines*, the *Moabites*, the *Ammonites*, the *Damascens*, the *Amalekites*, of the King of *Zoba*, and of all the turbulent and ambitious Spirits of the House of *Saul*: delights to recount their Might, and their Machinations, the more to signalize their Overthrow, and to make his Victory illustrious. For after all their rage, their malice, their Counsels, their Combinations, their seeming successes against him, the Issue was this: *Yet have I set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion.*

We may observe in the Words these three things:

- I. The Person established, *My King*, i. e. *David* Literally so called, and *Christ* Mystically.
- II. His Establishment, *I have set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion.*
- III. God's Glorifying in the Fact, that he had done it with such a *Non obstante*, notwithstanding such Opposition and Contradiction: *Yet have I set my King—*

I. The Person established, *My King*, God's King. Not only holy Scripture, but the Writings of Heathens declare Kings to be Sacred Persons, descended more immediately from the Gods, and more particularly depending on them. *Kings* are from *Jupiter*, says *Callimachus*, and nothing ever descended more sacred from him. And *Theocritus*, Kings are the special Care of the Gods. And this *Epithet*'s affected by *Homer* $\Delta\iota\iota\ \phi\acute{\iota}\lambda\omicron\iota\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$, God-lov'd Kings. Indeed all Kings in general are God's, derive their Authority from him, govern by his Permission and Providence, as himself testifies, *By me Kings Reign*. But then he delights in a more especial manner to style Good Kings, *his*; to appropriate their Persons, and owne their Causes, to interpret all things done to them, as done to himself, as at Verse 2. *Why do the Rulers*

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Rulers take Counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed ? Conspiracies against the King, are reckoned Conspiracies against God; the resisting his Anointed, the resisting himself. And thus, if it be a Glorious thing to be a King, 'tis a Blessed to be a *Good King* : for as splendour attends Majesty and Greatness ; protection, and safety , and felicity, and the love of Heaven attend *Righteousness*. But let us see why *David* is here more particularly call'd *God's King* than others.

The First Reason we may say was, Because he was a King of *God's Making*, because he brought him to the Throne, having no Title by Birth to it, à *Caulis Ovinum tuli te*, I called him from the *Sheep-hook* to the *Sceptre*. And as those Persons which are of our Election, preferring, or favouring, we call Ours ; this is my *Scholar*, my *Souldier*, my *Officer*, because he was of my nomination, my chusing, my advancing : so *David* was called *God's King*, because he was of his chusing and advancing ; his Right to the Crown, was his immediate nomination ; he had no other Interest in the Royalty, but the Interest he had in God's favour ; and if he had not been *God's King*, he had not been *King of Israel*.

2. *David* was call'd *God's King* more particularly, by reason of his many Deliverances of him ; he preserv'd him, from the time of his first anointing by *Samuel*, from the jealousy of *Saul*, and the malice of *Saul's* house ; conducted him through all the potent and perillous Oppositions of the Heathen , as I shew'd, and left him not till he had set him on his holy Hill of *Sion*, i. e. establish'd him peaceably and Gloriously on the United Throne of *Israel* and *Judah*. And for this reason *David* is not only call'd *God's King* in my Text, but in the following Verse, his
Son,

Son, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. The Day of his Redemption and Promotion, being counted the Day of his Creation. And the same Words are apply'd to Christ in the like manner after his Resurrection, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* The day of his deliverance from death and the Grave, is call'd the day of his Nativity or Generation; the day in which God exalted him, and Invested him with Power, the day in which he begot him.

3. *David* was call'd *God's King* more particularly, because he was a King of his liking, as 'tis said, *After his own heart.* And in this sense also men say a thing is theirs, when they approve it, and are pleased with it above things of the like kind. *Horace* is my *Poet*, *Tully* is my *Orator*, *Tacitus* is my *Historian*, because these hit my fancy and Genius. In the Books of the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah*, and the Chronicles of their Acts, there's registred a long Catalogue of them; but though they were all Kings of God's people, they were not all *God's Kings*, in this last sense, *Kings of his liking*: he did not boast of many of them, or owne their proceedings, but of those only which executed Justice and Judgment, destroyed Idolatry, and restored the true Worship; the others, though they wore the Crown, they wore not the Praise of being Kings of God's liking; they were of the *Royal Unction*, but not of this Divine Relation. And just after this manner *Christ* esteemed his Kindred, not the that bare him was his Mother; nor those that descended of the same Stock, were of his Alliance; but *they that heard his sayings, and did them, were his Mother, his Sisters, and his Brethren.* 'Tis not he that bears the Diadem and the Scepter, not he that is of the Race of Kings, that is anointed by

by the Prophet, shouted for by the people, praised by the hired Historian, that is *God's King*, but he that does that which is Righteous in his sight: the others may boast their Title *from* God, but they can boast no Title *to* him, to his Approbation and liking, and consequently not to his Protection and Blessing. In the *Hebrew* Dialect, things that excel in Greatness or Height above others, are entitled to God, tall Cedars are thus styl'd *Cedars of God*, high Mountains, *Mountains of God*; great Rivers, *Rivers of God*, &c. And Kings that excel only in might and magnificence, are entitl'd to God but as *Trees* and *Mountains*, and we may say unto them, as the *Psalmist* does to the high Hills, *Why leap ye so ye high Hills?* that is, why do ye insult, or lift up your proud heads unto the Clouds? *Sion* is *God's Hill*, where he delights to dwell, *Sion* of an humbler and lower pitch, but more pleasant and fruitful. 'Tis not the Bulk and large Dimensions of any thing that commends it to God, but the *Vertue* of it; not the King, mighty in his Host, goodly in the Symmetry and Proportions of his Body, but the King that's mighty in Goodness, whose Actions hold a just Symmetry and Proportion with God's Laws; 'twas not *Saul* higher than the People, but *David* eminent in Piety, with whom God made his Covenant of Mercy, and set upon *his holy Hill*. Which brings me to my second part, The Establishment of *David*.

I have set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion. By four Circumstances observable in the Words, may be seen the extraordinary security in which God placed *David* after all his Troubles. He set him on *Sion*, and *Sion* was a Fortrefs taken by *David* from the *Jebusites*, who had made it the chief strength and Seat of their Kingdom. And so, First, 'Twas a
Fortification

The Seventh Sermon.

Fortification by *Art*. Secondly, 'Twas a Hill, and that's a Fortification by *Nature*: such as must be ascended, before it can be assaulted. Thirdly, 'Twas a *holy Hill*, and Holiness is another Fortification, a *Moral* or *Spiritual*, stronger than either of the former, for here *God* is the Watch-man, and concern'd in the Defence. And therefore, Fourthly, 'Tis said *My, i. e.* God's holy Hill of *Sion*, the place where he dwelt, and had fixt his Tabernacle; God had other Places of Religious Worship in the Land, but *Sion* was the *Metropolis* to which the rest paid Homage, and to which all the Tribes came up thrice every Year to offer their Oblation, and so was God's by a more Excellent Title. And to storm this Place was as vain an Enterprize (if God did not first forsake it, drove away by the Sins of the Inhabitants) as to attempt to force *Heaven* it self: for he would sooner neglect the Government of the World, than forget the Place where *his Honour* dwelt. So that *David* being establish'd on *Sion*, might defie all danger from the Princes his Enemies abroad, or from his ill-affected Subjects at home; nay he was so far from Fearing from any of them, that he was Formidable to them, as the last Verse of this *Psalms* shews. *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings—— Kiss the Son, i. e.* pay subjection to *David* himself (for that's the first sense of the Words) *lest he be angry, and ye perish——*

Thus we see *David*, who for so many Years together, fled from place to place (as he describes his own condition) *like a Partridge upon the Mountains*, fixt and establish'd like a Mountain, environ'd with a fourfold Fortification, as if he had been within the Enclosures of *Heaven* it self: so that with a Pious presumption he might well say, as he does, *Psal. 30. 6.*

I shall

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I shall never be removed, thou, Lord, of thy goodness hast made my Hill so strong. And let no man think much, that there was a time that he was depress'd and afflicted, as many are apt to take scandal when they read or hear such things as this,

Insignem pietate virum tot adire labores.

That Persons excelling in *Piety*, should excel also in *Sufferings*; for God by these ways conducts his Servants to the Noblest Ends, hardens and prepares the Instruments of his Glory by afflictions, as men do those Tools which they design for the toughest Employments, by several drenchings of them in astringent Water. *Prospera in plebem, ac vilia ingenia deveniunt*, a constant even Prosperity is the Lot of mean Persons and Spirits, the Noble and Magnanimous are oppos'd to the Storms and Outrages of Fortune; nor are they otherwise to be distinguish'd from the Vulgar, than by these Encounters. That Great Person, says *Seneca*, that never prov'd *Adversity*, is like a Champion that enters the Lists without an *Antagonist*; *Coronam habet, Victoriā non habet*. He may gain a Crown, but he never got a *Victory*. In a still Calm of Affairs God himself gets less Glory, he has no Field to shew his *Power*, his *Wisdom*, and his *Goodness* in, the Opportunity is not afforded him to frustrate the Counsels of the wicked, and to bring the Preparations of the Mighty to nought. 'Tis true, He governs all things at all times, but every Act of his Providence is not a Victory over his Enemies; and though he disposes Crowns and Scepters as he pleases; 'tis when the wicked resists, that he says, *Yet have I set my King*—— And so I pass to my Third Part, *God's Glorifying in his Establishment of David*.

R

The

The *Holy Ghost* in this *Second Psalm*, sets down the Method which the *Enemies of David* used, to prevent his succeeding in the *Throne*, which is also the Scheme *ordinarily* of all *Sedition and Rebellion*. First, *The Heathen did rage, i. e.* The *Neighbour Princes* were jealous and angry, out of apprehension of their own *Estates*; and this is commonly the ground of *Defection and Rebellion*: For a *King's* own *Subjects*, though they be malecontent, and bear him ill-will in their hearts; yet they often want *Courage* or *Opportunity* to execute it, till they are backt by a *Foreign Power*. But then Secondly, *The People, i. e.* the *Prince's* own *People*, begin to imagine *vain things*; which may either mean *false things* which shall not take *Effect*; or *Wicked* which shall; for in both senses *Vain* is taken in the *Hebrew*. In the Third place, *The Kings of the Earth, and the Rulers take counsel together, i. e.* The *Neighbour Kings*, and the *Magistrates*, and *Great Ones* of the *Realm* fall into *Combinations* and *Associations*. And then Fourthly, Nothing remains but *open defection*, the breach of all *Covenants* and *Contracts*, and *Sedition* is heard in every mans mouth, as *Verse 3. Let us break their Bonds asunder, and cast away their Cords from us: Their Bonds, and their Cords, i. e.* both of the *Lord*, and of his *Anointed*, all *Obligations* both *Humane* and *Divine* are *Cancell'd*. By *Bonds*, may be understood the *softer* and *gentler* *Tyes* of *Natural Love* and *Loyalty*, which every *Subject* owes unto his *Sovereign*: by *Cords*, the stronger *Obligations* of *Oaths*, those *Sacramental Chains* that bind men like *Iron Shackles* and *Fetters*. But both these are broken, and for fear they should be again united, cast quite from them. And why was all this? as the *Question* is deservedly ask'd at *Verse 1.* with wonder and indignation:

dignation : *Why did the Heathen rage ? Why did the people imagine a vain thing ? Why did they take Counsel together ?* David was just to his Allies abroad, and gracious to his Subjects at home, God prosper'd him, and made him Victorious in all his Enterprizes. *Why, Lord ?* To answer in the Words of another in a like Case, *Odiorum causæ acriores, quia iniquiores*, their hatred was the sharper and more implacable, because it was the unjuster ; *Innocence* is abhorr'd by the Wicked, more than Injury and Violence ; The Religion and Piety of *David* was more insupportable to his Enemies, than the Yoke of Tyranny and Oppression ; and they chose rather to bear the Iron Scepter of the Nations, or of a base Usurper, than his holy and righteous Scepter. And this it was which made the Establishment of *David* so difficult, because there was no *Why*, no *Just Cause* for the Aversion of his Enemies ; had there been a Reason, it might have been remov'd ; had there been a Wrong, there might have been a Reparation : but *Perverseness* and *Impiety* only govern'd, and God utters himself, as if he had broke through some great Obstruction in setting *David* on the Throne. Like one that for a long time roll'd a Stone against a Hill, which often return'd upon him ; or Row'd against a strong Tide, which forc'd his Boat back, and when at last by many a weary stretch and Strain of his Arms has got the better, sits down, and reflects on what has past, congratulates his labour, and tells himself what himself has done : Yet I have planted my Stone upon the Top of the Hill ; or, yet I have stemm'd this Churlish Stream, and got my Boat a-head of it. So God is pleas'd to speak in the Restoring of *David*, as if he had been hard put to it, and groan'd under the performance, and Glory'd in having at last carry'd it through, *Yet have I set my King*——

R 2

But

The Seventh Sermon.

But perhaps some will say, *Is there any thing difficult to the Almighty? Could not he have crush'd the Cockatrice in the Shell? Dash'd the yet Infant-Plot against the Stones? Scatter'd his Enemies in their first Imaginations? Why did he suffer them to Combine, before he confounded them? Confederate and grow to strength, before he cast them down, and had them in derision?* as 'tis said, *ver. 4.* Even for this very reason, That he might not spoil such his Scene of Laughter, prevent the Glory of his Triumph, obscure the wise Dispensations of his Providence, that *David* might see the whole Wonder of his Deliverance, and his wicked Adversaries the whole Folly of their Enterprize. A wise General will not presently give on the Charge upon an Enemy passing a Ford, till a considerable Party have gain'd the Bank; that he may not only shew his Courage but his Conduct; and cut off the adverse Power as well as repulse it. Thus, though God had it in his hands to dissipate and discourage the first Attempts of his own and *David's* Opposers, he chose rather to let them proceed and prosper to a degree, that he might not only obstruct their wickedness, but defeat it; disturb the Conspiracy, but confound the Conspirators. And our Blessed Lord practis'd this piece of Policy, when he suffer'd the Devil by his wicked Instruments, the *Jews*, to take away his Innocent Life, and lay him in the Grave: For after *Satan* flatter'd himself that he had surpriz'd his strong Foe, he let him see he was surpriz'd by him; that instead of receiving a Captive, he had receiv'd a Conquerour within his Gates: one that sack'd and despoil'd his Kingdom, dismantled his Forts, and raz'd his Strong-holds. And this was a performance worthy of that Triumphant Speech, *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory!* A down-right
 Defeat

Defeat is not so renowned to the Conquerour, or so grievous to the Conquered, as to turn his Stratagems upon himself, and to overthrow him by his own Subtily and Treachery, Again, to Mock and Vex an Enemy, is a further degree of Revenge than to destroy him. When the Pyrates of *Cilicia* began to treat some Passengers of *Italy* with the cruelty they used unto their other Prisoners, they cry'd out, *They were Citizens of Rome*, at which the Pyrates pretended to start, as awed by that formidable Name, and commanded presently Gowns to be brought, and put upon their Backs, and Shoes on their Feet; and then with a seeming lowly observance besought them, *To walk over the sides of the Ship, and be free*; telling them by way of excuse for their Violation of such Venerable Persons, *When they met them next in that Attire they should not be ignorant of their Quality*; and with this derision threw them into the Sea, when the unfortunate men refus'd to cast themselves. And the Enemies of *David* were such, as God thought fit not only to destroy, but also to mock and vex, as 'tis said Verse the 4th and 5th, *The Lord had them in derision*—— *And vexed them in his sore displeasure*. But How, and after What manner did he mock and vex them: By letting them a long time plot and strengthen themselves, make a profuse expence of labour, money and blood, by letting them perswade themselves they had prevailed, that *David* was utterly excluded; and then after all, to shew them the despised and Rejected Son of *Jesse* set Gloriously on the Throne; their Machine of Usurped Government, made a Pageant for his Triumph; all their endeavours, all their glorying, serve but for this Occasion of God's glorying over them, *Tet have I set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion*.

I have

I have done with the Words, which have been twice already eminently fulfilled; Once, as I have shewed, in the Person of *David*. And a Second time, in the Exaltation of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ* into the Kingdom of Heaven, after his Resurrection, and setting up his *Spiritual Throne* in the hearts of men. So that I may seem to essay an Impious thing, to make a Third Application to any Mortal King whatsoever. But while I shall not parallel or compare the Sufferings and Exaltation of the Divine and Mystical King, but adore his Foot-steps; there will be no danger to shew the Tracts and Lineaments that are between the Deliverance and Establishment of *David*, and of our Gracious *Sovereign*, for the awaking our Gratitude, and magnifying God's mercies shewed to *this Nation* this Day.

And to observe the Method I began with: For the same Reasons and Respects that *David* is called *Gods King* in my Text, our *King* may pretend to the Title, before all the present Kings of the Earth.

First, He was a King of God's particular and singular Advancing, and placing on the Throne: though not call'd, like *David*, from being a poor Shepherd-Boy to Rule a Kingdom, but descended of a long and glorious Race of Kings; yet recall'd from a forlorn exil'd State, and a deposd Condition, to hold the Scepter of his Royal Ancestors by a no less Divine Favour. So that whatever his Title to the Crown was, we may truly say, Had he not been *God's King*, he had not been King of this Land.

Secondly, *David* was not only call'd *God's King*, as we have shew'd, for his Eminent Deliverance of him, but *His son*. And whoever considers the many *Risques* of our Sovereign's Life, the *Prodigies* both of his Dangers and Escapes, how God snatcht him out
of

of the Battel, led him safe through the midst of his Enemies, conceal'd him many days by a Divine Providence, after the manner the Ancients feign'd their *Heroes* were wrapt in a Cloud; and then, without the assistance of Armies, by the same Invisible and Unresistable Hand, fixt him in his Throne: must confess, we have not only reason to celebrate this Day, for his coming into the World, and his coming to the Crown; for the Birth, I say, of his Person, or the Birth of his Royal Dignity, but for his being Born *God's King*, and *God's Son*, *i. e.* The King of his Preservation, and the Son of his Promotion.

Thirdly, As *David* was call'd *God's King*, because he was more pleas'd with him, than with others; was the King of his *liking*, as well as of his *Preserving* and *Advancing*: So the Wonderful Testimonies of God's Love to our Sovereign, warrants, nay obliges us to believe, and revere him as *God's King* also in this sense, as the King of his *liking*, and *after his own heart*. And whom God has approv'd, let no man judge; whom he has Seal'd, let no man dare to Censure; no not in his thoughts. Princes then for the most part want Goodness, when the People want Candour; and their defect of Vertue, is their Subjects defect of Love and Loyalty. But if those were *God's Kings*, Kings of his liking, Kings after his own heart, that set up the True Worship, and discountenanc'd the False, that executed Justice and Judgment in the Land, then Malice it self must confess, our King is *God's King*. *David* was renown'd for that one Merciful Speech upon his Return to his Kingdom, *Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel?* As if it had been a thing to be abominated, to shew Severity, when God had shew'd him such singular Grace. But how many *Shimei's*, how many
Railers,

Railers, how many Cursers? ('tis but a small thing which I have said) how many Capital Enemies, how many Betrayers, how many Covenanters against him, and lyers in wait for his Blood, did our *David* pardon upon his Return? 'Twas an Observation of Old,

-----*regnabit sanguine multo*
Ad regnum quisquis venit ab exilio;

The King that returns after Exile, will Reign for the Future in Blood and Revenge: But our King contrariwise after his Exile, -----*regnabat Sanguine parco*, Reigns at this day, as one *Elected* to a Kingdom, that had a Crown bestow'd on him, and not as one that had recover'd his own. So that as the *Virgins* gave *David* the preheminance to *Saul* in the Songs of Victory and Triumph, saying, *Saul has slain his thousands, and David his Ten thousands*: We in the Songs of Mercy and Clemency, may give our King the preheminance to *David*, and say, As *David* pardon'd one single Detractor, our Gracious Sovereign gave life, and opportunity of Repentance to thousands of Traitors and Murtherers, and was truly in this, *Gods King*, and not only a King *of his liking*, but a King that *is like him*, resembling him in one of his Noblest Attributes, that of his *Mercy*. Those to whom Princes intrust the care of their Souls, ought to be faithful to them; and not only speak pleasing things, but true; to imitate good Surgeons, who not always use Oyls and Lenitives, but if need be, Lancets and Corrosives. But then let no man at a distance surmise Evil of his Prince, lest while he denies him to be *Gods King*, he sets to his hand to make him no King at all; and while he strips him of his Righteousness, strips him also of his Royal Dignity. I speak not to
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the Kings Enemies, but to his severer Friends, if he have any : The Sinister Thoughts and Censures of the Subject are often Ominous and Fatal to a Prince, whereas their good Opinions are prophetick, and presage the Vertue, they ascribe ; and make him the Person, they proclaim him. *St Paul* says, *Charity believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things,* (i. e.) those who have this Grace, are easily induced to believe the good of another, which they do not know ; to hope that, which they do not believe ; and to suffer, even when they can neither believe, nor hope. And if any man be not able to walk upon this profound Sea of Charity, why does he, like *Peter*, rashly and unbidden cast himself into it ? Why does he presumptuously Intrude into his Masters company ? Who supported by a Divine Power, shall stride Majestically o're the Waves, and march through the storm in safety ; while the other disorder'd by every Gust, and amaz'd at every Billow, poorly sinks in the danger his Fancy only fram'd. Will not such an one another day (like him in the Parable that wanted a Wedding-Garment) *be speechless ?* (i. e.) have nothing to say for himself, when he sees his Prince as far above him in Glory, as he was in his Station in this life ? And when 'tis objected to him, as 'twas to *Peter*, *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ?* But to proceed. *God set David on his holy hill of Sion.*

Not to say, that instead of one Fort of *Sion*, God has garded our King with many strong-holds and Castles, or yet to boast the Advantages of an Island above a Hill, which is not only to be ascended before it can be assaulted, but to be Sail'd to before it can be approach'd, and fought for before it can be Sail'd to ; being defended by moveable Bulwarks,

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stout Ships, which must be subdu'd before the Inhabitants can be grappl'd with upon equal terms: But to come to the Point, in which the chiefest strength of *Sion* consisted, in that it was a Moral and Spiritual Fortification, a *holy hill*, and *God's hill*. If the Church of Christ be not inferior to the Old Tabernacle, the Gospel to the Law, the substance to the shadow; when God not only set our King upon his Throne, but restor'd the True Religion, and plac'd him within the Protection of it, he set him upon as Holy, and consequently upon as strong a Hill as he set *David*; and we may rest assur'd, he delights as much to dwell here, and that 'tis as desperate an Enterprize to assault this his Habitation, as 'twas to assault *Sion*. But alas some will say with a deep sigh! Would we found these things to be so! But what for a long time has been more infirm and unstable than the Condition of this Nation? Not only ready to be broken in pieces by any Impression of an Enemy, but even to dissolve and fall asunder of it self; and the supports of Religion have been as weak, as those of the Arm of Flesh.

To which I answer, This has not happen'd from the Weakness of the Divine Assistances which God has given us, but from our neglect and contempt of them. Religion does not guard men like a *Palladium* or *Charm*, preserve those who have the luck only to wear it, and be possess'd of it, but those who practise it, and live according to its Precepts; they are not Sextons and Sacristis that are chiefly protected by Heaven, those that keep Divine things under Lock and Key, but that treasure them up in a faithful heart. When *David* by sin dishonour'd God, and defam'd Religion, his fourfold Fortification little profited him, but that security which the power
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of the *Heathen*, united with the disaffection of his Subjects, could not shake his rebellious Son alone drove him from ; and he fled ingloriously, and left his impregnable *Sion*, and all the Pledges of Gods favour and residence with him, behind him : confessing, that when he had violated their Sanctity, he had invalidated also their Power of Protecting ; and though he possess'd still the Curtains of the Tabernacle, the Deity was fled from him. And little will it profit us, to have the Gospel among us, nay, to have it more purely Preacht than to any other People under the Sun, if we are the worst Auditors of it of any other People under the Sun ; to have the Sacraments more rightly administer'd, if we are the wickedst Receivers of them. 'Tis the holy Use of holy Ordinances that makes them a guard and defence. Righteousness, as 'tis the Honour of the Soul, so 'tis the best Armour of the Body ; and does not only, as the *Psalmist* says, *Bring peace at the last*, but as the *Apostle* teaches, safety at present, *For who is he that shall harm you*, says he, *if you follow that which is good* ? 'Twas the Custom of the Ancient *Heathen*, when they Besieg'd a City, in the first place to endeavour to entice out the Guardian Deity, by alledging the Injustice of the Inhabitants, and inviting it to reside with a more holy People,

— *ut habeat te Urbs melior acceptiorque.*

Holding it impossible to prevail against the Outworks, when this Divine Inward strength stood firm. The Sanctity of a Christian is this little retir'd Deity in the Chappel, which if it cannot be charm'd or entic'd out by Temptation, the Malice of Earth and Hell cannot prejudice the Person in whom it dwells.

The Prophet *Elijah* was call'd, *The Chariots and Horsemen of Israel*, but much more deservedly may Justice, Piety, and Sanctity, be styl'd, *The Chariots and Horsemen of a Kingdom*. And when God, by the Restauration of his Majesty, and true Religion, gave us the Opportunity of exercising all Vertues Civil and Divine, he put it also into our hands to be as safe and well fortifi'd as we cared or desir'd to be, he made our Condition as secure as a Mortal condition could be made: and if our *Mountain* be turn'd into a *Wheel*, our *Rock* into a *Rolling-stone*, 'tis our sins that have unfixt and loosen'd its Roots; and while we are led by Vanity, what wonder is it that the Kingdom fluctuates after the manner of the Seas that surround it?

If we consider, Lastly, how great and difficult the work was, to set the Kingdom again upon its Basis, after it was so utterly subverted; to raise up the Truth and Splendor of the Church so long a time deform'd and Opprest by Schism and Sacrilege, we may allow God also as high, nay, a higher cause of Glorifying in our behalf, than for establishing the Church and State of *Israel*. But the time suffers me not to insist on this particular, neither is it very necessary to do it, we having all here been Witnesses and Partakers of what was pass'd, and this will be the properer Task of another Age. Instead therefore of dressing up a Triumph for God, into which also our own Vanity or Spleen may be apt to insinuate it self, I shall employ the few words yet allow'd me to speak, to excite our Thanks for these things.

And if the Benefits we have receiv'd are such as are worthy of God's Glorifying, undoubtedly they are Worthy of our highest acknowledgments, I say, of Ours, in the most General and Universal comprehension

hension both of Prince and People ; not of the Prince alone, as some are willing to reckon the Benefits his Majesty has receiv'd, not to revere him the more for being so much in God's Favour, but to make him more indebted to God than themselves : as if, because this is call'd the *King's Day*, all the Mercies of it, and all the Thanks for them were to be put upon his account. Undoubtedly the Kings Obligations to Heaven are infinite ; but was he only restor'd *this Day* to his Crown and Country ? Or were not all we likewise re-call'd from the same Banishment, or from Prisons and Sequestrations, Dungeons, and Gibbets at home, to enjoy our Lives and Liberties, our Religion and Estates ? Has all the delicious Fare of the Land been serv'd to the Kings Table ? All the Gold Lace been worn upon his Back ? Nay, but I behold many at this instant standing like Kings in the presence of the King : and 'tis to be complain'd of, that the Enjoyments of many Out vie his in their proportion. Is there then no Thanks of our Own due to God ? We have this Obligation even more than the King has, that we have him, that we enjoy this Principle of Union, this Bond of Peace, this Foundation of Security and Prosperity. O let us not forget in the loud Joys, and Gaiety, and Festivity of this Day, the days of *Sadness* and *Silence*, of *Scarcity* and *Doubtfulness* of Soul, when we had no King ; when a Villain sat on the Throne, when our Hatred and Aversion rul'd over us ; the Scourge of Loyalty, and the Oppressor of Religion and Justice. Let us not forget the Time, when to be Noble, was to be Guilty ; and to be Loyal, an Enemy to the State : Again, when to be a Mechanick, made room for the Person in the Places of Honour ; and a *Fanatick*, qualify'd him for the highest Charges and Honours,
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and our Great Ones bow'd down to these, or bow'd under the saddest Misery.

The remembrance of these things will make us readily acknowledge the Mercies of this Day to have been General to us all; and not only heighten, but sanctifie our Joy; make the Feast resound with Thanksgiving and Praises of God, and not wholly to be spent in loose and confus'd Mirth, Riot, and Excess; it will preserve us from falling into that Fatal Ingratitude which accompanies Prosperity, and which God, in the People of *Israel*, warns all Nations of, and yet which all more or less fall into, *The forgetfulness of the Arm that deliver'd them, and the Goodness that made them Great.* And in the midst of our Felicity, we shall remember our Duty; and our Ease shall not corrupt our Manners; nor our Prosperity and Affluence, be snares to us. And God will repeat and iterate his glorying, we have heard this Day, not only in the Person of our King, but of his Posterity to all Ages, even till all Kingdoms are swallow'd up in the Kingdom of Heaven, *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Sion.* Which God of the riches of his Mercy grant, to whom be ascribed all Honour, Glory, and Thanksgiving this day forth, and for evermore. *Amen.*

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The Eighth Sermon.

JOHN xvi. 8.

*And when he is come, he will reprove
the World of Sin, of Righteousness,
and of Judgment.*

GOD, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, says the Apostle, *spake in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*, &c. as if this were his *ultimus conatus*, the last and utmost Effort or Endeavour of his Power and Goodness to reduce the Sinful and Unbelieving World. But by miserable Event it appear'd, that this Means prov'd as uneffectual as the former; that the World did unto *Christ*, as they had done unto the Prophets before him; *slew the Son*, as they had slain the *Servants*. Yet notwithstanding, the unfathomable Depths and Riches of the Divine Goodness gave not over here, where Reason would have given over; but shew'd it self still Infinite, where
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Humane Imagination was Finite; bow'd the Heavens again, and sent down the third Person in the Trinity, the Holy Ghost. *Pertinacia nostra exhaust Cælum*, the Obstinacy of Men even drain'd and exhausted Heaven; *Verbum Caro*, the Word made Flesh was not sufficient to master this Obstinacy, but it must be *Verbum Spiritus* too, the Spirit must become a Word, *i.e.* be sent from Heaven to be a Word in the Mouth of the Apostles to reprove, or as the Margent has it [*to convince*] the World of Sin. *And when he is come, he will reprove [or convince] the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment.*

To convince, is to force the Understanding of the Opposer by strength of Argument to acknowledge the Truth that is contended for. And *to reprove or rebuke* is again but a Moral Conviction of Sin in a person.

In the Words I shall consider these two things.

I. The Matter of the Conviction, which the Spirit shall bring the World to an Acknowledgment of, *namely, of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment.*

II. The Manner how he shall bring the World to this Acknowledgment, *viz. by convincing it by irrefragable Arguments.* I begin with the Matter of the Conviction, *Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment.*

And First, *He shall convince the World of Sin.*

What Sin it is, which is meant here, that the Spirit shall convince the World of, is doubtful. It may well be thought to be the Sin of Cruelty, the perverse and barbarous Inhumanity the Jews shew'd, when they demanded a Murderer to be releas'd unto them, and kill'd the *Just One*. And we read in Effect, *Acts* 2. 36. that it was one of the first Works
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of the Spirit after his coming, to bring three thousand Souls to confess this Sin, and shew their Compunction for it: for after St Peter had laid before them *how by wicked hands they had crucified and slain the Lord of Life, they were prick'd to the heart, and said, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* i.e. to be deliver'd from the Sin of Murder or Cruelty.

But though this Interpretation be plausible, it agrees not with the Reason *Christ* himself gives in the Verse immediately following my Text, why the Holy Ghost should convince the World of Sin. *Of Sin,* says he, *because they believe not on me.* It should seem then, it was the Sin of Unbelief that he came to reprove or convince the World of. And this is the Opinion of many on the place. The truth is, Infidelity is a Sin highly injurious to the Deity, *it makes God a Lyar, as St John says, He that believeth not God, hath made him a Lyar.* It makes him impotent and ignorant, *How should God perceive,* says the Wicked, *Psal. 73. 11. is there knowledge in the most High?* And the faithless *Israelites, Can God prepare a Table in the Wilderness?* *He smote the stony Rock indeed, that the Water gushed out; but can he give Bread also, and provide Flesh for his People?* Nay, it fancies him also Wicked, as those words spoken in the Person of God, *Psal. 50. do shew. Thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thy self.* And in the last place it concludes him to be Nothing at all. *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.* Infidelity first entertains Mean thoughts of God, doubts of his Attributes, and afterwards of his very Being. Infidelity moved God to send upon the *Israelites* in the Wilderness almost as many and grievous Plagues, as he had sent upon the *Egyptians.* And many Christian Professors are so possess'd against this Sin, that they have not

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doubted to aver, That as there is no Vertue that justifies but Faith, so there is no Sin that condemns but Infidelity. And that the *Jews* were highly guilty of this Sin in reference to *Christ*, there is no question: for though he had wrought so many Miracles among them, as the Evangelist says, *they believed not on him*. They might have known who he was, if they had not been wilfully blind, by the Rule given them by *Moses*, *Deut. 18. 12.* to discern a True Prophet from a False; and again at the 18th ver. to distinguish the *Messiah* from other Common Prophets: yet blinded with Pride, Malice, Envy, and the like, the Great Council it self of the *Sanhedrim* condemned the Lord of Life for an Impostor, and crucified him; affirmed, That by a Confederacy with the Devil he cast out Devils. So that this their Unbelief, and perverse Proceeding, might be a very just Cause of the Descent of the third Person in the Trinity to vindicate the Injury and Outrage done to the second; after a Judicial Manner to arraign and convince the World of Sin, *i. e.* of Infidelity and Injustice to the Son of God.

But though there was Infidelity in the Case, I conceive they do exactliest hit the meaning of the place, who make not our Lord's Words point so much at any particular determinate Sin after his Coming, as at the General Sin, wherein all the World lay before his Coming, *viz. the Sin of Adam*, in which both Jew and Gentile were concluded: and from which, 'tis said, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned*. Now the Holy Ghost, when he came into the World to bear Testimony to all that *Christ* did, reprov'd and convinced it (that is, all Unbelievers) that they lay still under the Old Condemnation of the First Man, seeing

ing they embraced not the Means of Grace and Pardon offer'd by *Christ* in the Gospel: nay, and that their Infidelity added a new and worse Guilt to the former they lay under, the Guilt of refusing Offer'd Redemption; which would make their Condemnation yet heavier: For though Hell be the *ultimum Supplicium*, the utmost Punishment the Divine Vengeance can inflict; yet as there are Degrees of Sins, so there are Degrees of Torment; and, as 'tis said, *Hell shall be a second time heated for those that leave their first Station*: so we may say, it shall be a second time heated for those that refuse the Salvation offer'd by *Christ*.

The second Particular the Spirit shall convince the World of, is of *Righteousness*. But how must this be understood? Shall he convince the World of Sin and of Righteousness both? Yes, *de Peccato proprio, & Justitia aliena*, as *St Augustine* distinguishes, of its Own Wickedness, and of an Others Righteousness; the Spirit shall convince the World that 'tis sinful, and that *Christ* was Righteous. And thus our Lord afterwards interprets his own Words, *He will convince the World of Wickedness, because I go to my Father*. The World spared not, while *Christ* was on Earth, to spend their rash Judgments of him, *He is a Good Man*, say some: Nay, say others, *but he deceiveth the People*. Others again, *He is a Samaritan, and hath a Devil*, and the like. But his going to the Father, stopt the Mouth of all Slander: For as this was an approv'd Maxim, which was utter'd by the Man that was born Blind, *God heareth not Sinners*: So this was a Truth likely to find a more Easie and General Admittance, *God translateth not Sinners miraculously and visibly to Heaven*. *Enoch* and *Elias* were thus translated; but 'tis testified of the first, *That he pleased*

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God, and of the last, That his Zeal for God's Glory exceeded. *Christ* therefore being translated to Heaven, it was an irrefragable Proof of his Righteousness. But how did the Holy Ghost convince this? Why, by his very coming into the World, had he born no other Testimony: For *Christ* had said in the Verse before my Text, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* The Descending of the Holy Ghost was the Consequent of *Christ's* Ascending.

But then the *Righteousness*, which the Spirit shall here convince the World of, must be understood in a greater Latitude, than only of the Inherent Righteousness in *Christ's* Person; it comprehends also the Transient Righteousness that pass from him to others: As *S^t John* says in another place, *That he was not only a Glorious Light in himself, but the Light of the World, and the Light of Men.* A Righteousness of greater Concern and Importance, than his Inherent Righteousness: for that made his Person only Illustrious, but this brought Utility and Benefit to Mankind; and as the first spoke him the Son of God, the last also the Saviour of the World. *Christ's* Righteousness is therefore here to be understood *Causative*, that he was the Author or Cause of Righteousness; not only that he was *Righteous*, but *Righteousness unto others*; and that two Ways. First, In respect of his *Doctrine*, that was *Righteousness*, the very Rule and Standard of it, the perfect Will of God able to conform us to his Likeness, and the World rejected it, only because their Deeds were Evil. And this the Holy Ghost, when he came, convinc'd the World of, viz. of the Desperateness of its Condition, that it had refused the True Light, and for no other reason than for that which was named, Because their Deeds were

were Evil, and they hated to be reform'd. Secondly, *Christ* was *Righteousness* in respect of the Justification of the World, as he was *Justitia nostra*, the Lord our *Righteousness*, as the Prophets had foretold. And indeed this was the Chief Office and Business of the Holy Ghost at his coming; to convince Men, That there was no other Name under Heaven by which they could be sav'd, but only by that Name: That neither the Contemplation of things Divine, together with the Practice of Moral Vertues, which was the *Gentiles* Way; nor the Plea of being Circumcised, and descended from such and such Parents, which was the *Jewish* Way, avail'd any thing towards the obtaining of Justification, without the laying hold of *Christ's Righteousness*.

The third Particular the Spirit shall convince the World of, is of *Judgment*. *St Bernard* understood the Words *Actively*, viz. That the Spirit shall convince the World of its Perverse Judgment of *Christ*, and the other things appertaining to God. *He shall convince the World*, says he, *de Peccato quod dissimulat, de Justitia quod non ordinat, de Judicio quod usurpat*, of the Sin which they now cloak or dissemble, of the Righteousness which they direct not aright, and of the Judgment they unduly exercise. But the 11th Verse clearly opposes this Interpretation, and shews that the Judgment spoken of, is not meant of the World *Actively*, which the World had made, but *Passively*, which shall be made or pass'd upon the World. Now the World, or Unbelieving Part of it, are said to be convinc'd by the Judgment that should come upon them in this, *That the Prince of the World is cast out*. For he that hath Master'd the Prince, broken the Power of his Kingdom, and holds him in Vassalage, may be accounted to have master'd and subdu'd

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subdu'd his People also : And the Prince of the World is said to be thus Judg'd two Ways.

First, By spoiling him of his Strength : *Having spoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it, Coloss. 2. 15.* What is a Prince when he is stript of his Power ? When his Counsels and Policies are defeated or detected, his Officers arrested, his Prisons broke open, his Fortresses ruined and dismantled, his Harnes and Ammunition of War seised, and the like ? And thus *Satan* was divested and unthroned by *Christ*, and shewed openly to be judged and subdued after the Coming of the Holy Ghost. Sin, his strong Yoke, by which he held Mankind in Bondage and Slavery, was broken ; Guilt, the Plea of his Dominion and Tyranny over them, taken away by Satisfaction made for it ; Temptation, his great Stratagem, made weak and invalid by Grace ; Death, his Sergeant himself, mortified ; the Grave, his Prison, set open, and made only a Dormitory and harmless Through-fare to Life. These things were his first Judgment, before the great and final Day, when the Staff of his Authority was, as 'twere, broken over his head, and no Power left him, but what those that love Servitude better than Freedom ; chose their own Destruction before the Salvation purchas'd for them, voluntarily give him over themselves. These things, I say, did evince the Fall of *Satan* as manifestly, as the train of Light, which follows that which the People call a Falling Star, evinces the descent of that Meteor ; and which possibly our Lord alluded to, when he said, *I beheld Satan, as Lightning, fall from Heaven.*

But then, Secondly, *Satan* is judged Personally : for though his Sentence of Condemnation be yet, as I may say, but Ambulatory, in regard of the Execution,

tion, yet it is Final and Peremptory in regard of the Determination. He that has forfeited his Life to the Law, and is reserved in Chains in expectation of the next Assize ; or waits only *donec sternuntur Subsellia*, till the Judge puts on his Robes, and the Court sits, differs but little from him, that has actually received his Doom. And such is *Satans* Condition since the Coming of *Christ* and the Holy Ghost, *Datur mora parvula*, some little stay there is, till the *Figure of this World be changed*, and then he goes for ever to his Proper Place. And let this suffice to be said of the Matter which the Spirit shall reprove or convince the World of : namely, of *Sin*, of *Righteousness*, and of *Judgment*. I come in the next place to shew the Manner, how the Spirit did convince the World.

The Manner of the Conviction.

The word in the Original ἐλέγξει, signifies, as was said, either to *Reprove* or to *Convince* ; to convince the Understanding of an Errour, or to reprove the Will of a Crime. And the Holy Ghost performed both these parts at his Coming.

First, He convinced mens Understandings, that they were in Sin ; under the Guilt contracted by the first Man, and that Belief in *Christ*, (who was the Seed of the Woman that was to bruise the Serpents head, and who had power to cast out the Prince of the World, that he should no more abuse the Nations) was the only Way to get out of that and all other Sins, and to obtain Justification. And this was *de facto* brought to pass, in so great a Part of the World's being converted after the Coming of the Holy Ghost, and being content to go down into the Laver of Regeneration, the Waters of Baptism, to cleanse

cleanse away their Sins : and the Church of Christ in those days might have been compared , as Solomon compared the *Jewish* to a *Flock of Sheep newly come up from washing*. For all these renounced the Prince of this World , and acknowledged *Jesus Christ* to be the only Saviour : and those that made use of and improved the Grace given them in Baptism , found the Devil a weak and impotent Prince , that might easily be resisted and foiled ; that had no Power but what was meerly precarious and delusive , such as might perswade or deceive men into Sin , but could not compel them.

But then as the Holy Ghost wrought this Conviction on the Unbelieving World , by what Means did he work it ? There are two Ways of convincing Mens Judgments , The one by *Argumentation* , and necessary Consequence on certain Premisses granted ; The other by *sensible and ocular Demonstration* : And though the last Way of these , by *Aristotle* and the Masters of Reason , be counted *ἀτεχνον* , unartificial and less Noble , yet in Assurance it goes beyond all manner of Reasoning. And this was the Way the Holy Ghost took to Convince the Gain-saying World of the Salvation preached by *Christ* : Our Lord himself also points at this Way , *Joh. 15. 26.* where he says to his Disciples , *When the Comforter is come , the Spirit of Truth , he shall testify of me , and ye also shall bear Witness. Ye also shall bear Witness*] was not unnecessarily added : for a Spirit has no Voice of its own , no more than it has Flesh and Bones : But the Apostles were the Spirit's Agents , their Sermons were its Voice , and their Hands its Organs by which it wrought its Miracles : the Epistles of *S^t Paul* , and of the rest of the Apostles , we may say , were the *Rhetorick* , but the Acts of the Apostles were the *Logic*

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gick of the Holy Ghost. The truth is, whatever other Proofs were brought for the Confirmation of Christian Religion, *Miracles* were the Strength of it, the Unresistible Engines that bore down all Infidelity before them: and *S^t Paul*, *Heb. 2. 3.* shews the Unexcusableness of not yielding to this Conviction. *How shall we escape, says he, if we neglect so Great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard it, God also bearing them Witness with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghost?*

But then here some will say, That this Conviction, by the Miraculous Operations of the Holy Ghost, was indeed a Powerful Conviction to those that were Witnesses of them, and saw these things done: but what do they signifie to us, upon whom the Ends of the World are come, and saw them not? To answer this Objection at large, would be in Effect to ingage in a Discourse of the whole Subject of *the Truth of Christian Religion*, or *the Demonstration Evangelical*, of which *Eusebius*, the first Christian Historian after the Apostles, now extant, wrote seven Books: I shall therefore content my self, in the short time that remains to me, to present you, by way of Answer, only with one Consideration, but 'tis a Consideration that had great force with *S^t Augustine*, and 'tis this; The very Conversion of the World is the highest Argument imaginable, that it was converted by the Miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost. For that Man, says the Father, that can conceive the World should relinquish their long doted on Religion, received from their Ancestors with so much Veneration, and a Superstitious Conceit, that they had been Prosperous under it, a Religion so well suited to their Carnal

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Affections; and receive in Exchange of it a New Religion, derived from so despicable and infamous an Author, as a Mean Man crucified by his own Nation, and the very Principles of which were so harsh to Flesh and Blood, and contrary to all worldly Glory and Interest; That Man, says *S^t Augustine*, that can conceive this could be done without Miracle, is himself a greater Miracle, than those he thinks so hard to be believed. There were among the *Roman* Fencers of old one sort, that with a Net and Trident maintained Combate against their Opposers armed with a Sword and Helmet, and were so dextrous as to intangle and vanquish their Adversaries with these Uncouth Weapons. The Apostles of *Christ*, those Fishers of Men, may be likened to these *Retiarii*, these Fencers with Nets, who with the Metaphorical Nooses and Meaches of preaching, seconded by the Power of Miracles, ensnared and captivated to the Gospel the armed, potent, proud, Idolatrous, learned, and vicious World! And this was the Way the Spirit took at his Coming, if we interpret ἐλεγεῖν to Convince the Understanding of the World of its Errors.

But if we take it in the other Sense, *redarguet Mundum*, he shall Reprove the World for its Sins, it imports these two things. That the Spirit shall shame the World, And condemn it.

First, That it shall reproach and shame the World, for loving Darkness more than Light; Death, than Life; for lying under Wickedness and Guilt, when the Means of becoming Innocent was offered them; for chusing things Base and Degenerate, before things Noble and Praise-worthy; things Vicious and accompanied with Danger, rather than things Vertuous, though accompanied with Glory and Felicity; in a word, for chusing rather to perish in their Sins and

and Ignorance, than to be Instructed, reformed, and saved. And as the Spirit shall shame the World for so brutish and sottish a Choice, so, Secondly, it shall Condemn it. Shame and Confusion of Face is but the beginning of the Misery of Sinners, the consequent of the Discovery of their Wickedness, not the Punishment of it. What the Wiseman says shall be the Portion of those that love Danger, *they shall perish in it* : is true also of those that love Darkness more than Light ; and the ways of Death, than the ways of Life ; that they shall prove what the Riddle of Eternal Death is, of a Death that never dyes, and dwell in Eternal Night and Darkness. And thus that Spirit, which is the Spirit of Love and Gentleness, which descended in the Similitude of a Creature that has no Gall nor Anger, and whose Office 'tis to save, to comfort, and support, shall exercise a Part so contrary to its Name and Nature, as to Condemn, destroy, and confound ; instead of shewing it self the Spirit of Lenity and Kindness, shew it self the Spirit of Indignation and Fury, a Froward, Chiding, and Reproaching Spirit. *O ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in Heart and Ears !* says the Holy Ghost by the mouth of St Stephen, *which of the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted ? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom ye have been now the Betrayers and Murderers.* Stephen who dyed the Example of Meekness, the Miracle of Patience and Charity, inspired by the same Divine Spirit, lived a sharp Reprover and severe Condemner of their Hardness of Heart and Unbelief.

And now, Beloved, to make some Application of what has been said : Are the things we have heard this day remote and unconcerning Stories ? Tales only of the Apostles Times, and Events at the first preaching

ching of the Gospel? Or is it not still the Business of the Spirit to *Convince the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment*? To rebuke and reprove it for the little or ill Use it has made of the Unvaluable Benefits offered it by *Christ*? To Judge and Condemn it for preferring the Ways of Death and Destruction, before those of Life and Salvation; even rejecting and crucifying the *Lord of Glory* a second time by their Sins? 'Tis true, the Extraordinary Miraculous Operations of the Holy Ghost are ceased; but his Ordinary, his Inward Reproofs and Convictions, by the Outward preaching of the Word; his converting, sanctifying, and justifying of some, and final Condemnation, and sealing up of others in their Impenitence, still remain. Christ's Work of our Salvation lasted but a while, and had its Period on the Cross; but the Spirit of Christ, which came after him, had no Period, no *Hitherto* of his working, but his Operations continue to the End of the World. And 'tis wonderful to consider, That after so many Unwearied and powerful Endeavours of the Spirit for sixteen hundred Years, that so much gross Infidelity and so many scandalous Impieties are still in the World: That the Unjust and Unmerciful are Unjust and Unmerciful still, the Voluptuous and Incontinent are voluptuous and incontinent still, the Prophane and Atheistical are prophane and atheistical still, the Seditious and Disobedient to Government persist to be so still: as if the World were grown too Old to blush or to learn: and what was said in Praise of our Lords Constancy and Resolution in Suffering, *That he Despised the Shame*, were Commendable also in the Effrontery and Impudence of the World in its Sins, That it despises all Shame. *S^t Augustine* says, That in his Young Unconverted days he boasted of many

The Eighth Sermon.

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many Sins, which he had never committed, *ne viderer abjectior, quo innocentior*, lest I should have appeared Abject and poor Spirited, if I had been known to be Innocent. And too many there are in this Age, that count the Vices of the Time the Gallantries of it; and are as much abasht to come behind in any Lewdness in Vogue, as to be late in the Fashion.

And when things stand thus, that those that have given their Names to *Christ in Baptism* are more profligate Sinners, than *Turks* and *Infidels*; may not Preachers be allow'd to say, The World is not yet Converted, the Holy Ghost has not perfected his Work? Good God! what a Change, what a Bustle, as I may say, did the Spirit make at his first Coming? Such as is still Wonderful to Posterity to hear or read! How many thousands were Converted by one Sermon? How many Nations were made Profelytes by unfolding but some one Divine Truth? Rich men sold their Lands, the Learned in Curious Arts their Books, and laid the Money at the Apostles Feet; Souldiers surrendred their Swords, Philosophers their Reason, Kings their Scepters, upon the Sight of a single Miracle; and, which was more than all the rest, they parted with their habitual Lusts, their gainful delightful Corruptions, as allowable and current generally in those days, as the Coin among them, and made an intire Oblation of them to the Gospel. But now the Spirit of God, by all the industrious and laborious Endeavours of his Servants, can hardly in many Months, in many Years, win some one Person from a Gainless Tasteless Evil Custom only, as vain Swearing, Lying, malicious Censuring, and the like.

And all that Men have to say in their Defence for
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this is, That they have not such Divine Teachers, nor do see the Miracles spoken of heretofore. Neither, as we may reply, do they need these. It was necessary to remove the Jewish Law, which was given by the Ministry of Angels, by a no less Glorious Ministration; to extirpate the long-rooted Superstition and Idolatry of the Heathens, by Divine and Supernatural Convictions: But do those that have been bred and train'd up in the Christian Religion, need an Apostle or Supernatural Teacher to tell them, They should not steal? Signs and Wonders from Heaven to inform them, They ought not to be Drunk, to commit Adultery, to be Schismatics or Traytors? If their Darknes be so great, 'tis not that God has not afforded them sufficient Light, but they wilfully shut their Eyes against it, or have Extinguish'd it, loving the Ways of Sin, more than the Ways of Righteousness: and 'tis not for such as these, proudly to exact Miracles again to enlighten them. God expects from the World the Returns of a holy Faith and Obedience for the innumerable Miracles of his Power, Wisdom and Goodness already shewed; and if obstinate and obdurate Sinners ask for more Signs and Wonders, they are to be answer'd, as our Lord answer'd the Jews upon the like perverse Demand, *That no Sign shall be given them, but that of the Prophet Jonas, i. e. those that are already past, and not regarded by them.*

The Holy Spirit with great Benignity and Long-suffering endeavours to reclaim Lapsed Sinners, gives them his preventing and assisting Grace; prompts them with Good Thoughts, and if they make use of these, actuates their Repentance, strengthens them to improve and encrease in Righteousness, and the like; But if they despise these Favours, stand upon
 Terms,

Terms, and expect Miracles ; will be converted at no Cheaper Rate, than the Holy Ghost's shewing himself in that Outward astonishing Manner, as he did at the first Pentecost ; they will sooner provoke him to exercise his last Dreadful Act, which is to Seal up obstinate Sinners in the Hardness of their Heart, than win him to prostitute his Divine Power to their wicked Fancies ; urge him to pronounce to them, what he does to the like Uncorrigible Sinners, *Rev. 22. 11. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still ; i. e.* the Time of Grace being forfeited by them, he will give them up to their own ways, and certain Destruction. Those therefore that thus Exalt themselves like *Lucifer*, let them take heed (while 'tis yet allowed them so to do) that they fall not also like him into the same Abyss of Eternal Misery ; consider that it becomes not those that have been Rebels to Heaven, to article and capitulate for the Manner of their Pardon and Reception into Favour ; to demand such Conditions and Priviledges as the Greatest Saints presume not to beg, *viz.* to stipulate for Miracles, when Pardon is too high a Grace ; as if Salvation was not their aim, but to triumph in the Contempt of God, and the breach of his Laws. The Prodigal Son, when he had spent his Portion in riotous Courses among Harlots, did not send impudently to his Father to supply him with more Considerable Sums, upon the consideration that what he had received of him was Small and Contemptible : but confess'd his Miscarriage, that he had wasted in Lewdness and Dissoluteness a Liberal Patrimony, and was not worthy to be counted the Son of so Good a Father ; that to be as one of his hired Servants, was above his desert : thus as his Crimes were heinous, his Thoughts of himself were lowly

lowly and mean ; as his Name was infamous, his Person squalid, his Condition indigent and vagabund, his Deportment and Requests were stamp'd with the profoundest Humility and Submission. And this being not a History of one that had spent a Portion in Money, but a Parable of such as have wasted the Stock of Grace given them by God, upbraids those that are arrogant and pufft up in the like Circumstance ; teaches them that 'tis their part, to put their Mouths in the Dust, and to abhor themselves, to repent in Sackcloth and Ashes, and to catch greedily and thankfully at the least Glimpse of Pardon, even upon the hardest Terms : and that this is the only Course to turn their Rags into Rich Robes and Gold Rings ; their Husks into a Fatted Calf ; their accursed Condition, without a Figure, into a Blessed and Heavenly.

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The Ninth Sermon.

MARK vii. 37.

—*He hath done all things well : he maketh both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak.*



OUR Lord had cured a man that was born deaf and dumb, by pronouncing the word *Ephata*, or he opened, and given him and the Standers-by a Charge not to make known the Miracle : but streight, (as if the *Ephata* spoken to one, had been to many thousands ; the untying the Dumb mans tongue had been the letting loose of the whole Multitudes) all the People began to spread and divulge the Fact ; and whereas he forbad them to whisper it, they proclaim'd it ; whereas he restrained them the Use of the Tongue, they employ'd, as I may say, the Trumpet ; and he that could make the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak, could not make the Multitude hold their peace. Neither does it appear that they

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were

were faulty, but grateful, in what they did ; perverse or refractory , but faithful and just. There were some Kind of Miracles, or rather some Conjunctions of Time in which our Lord wrought his Miracles, that he thought fit to suppress the Knowledge of them ; not that they were less Glorious, or likely to prove less Edifying, but contrariwise too Edifying and too Glorious, and would have disclosed his Divine Nature too early and abruptly to the World, before his Counsels permitted it. But the People (who supposed the reason of his concealing his Miracles proceeded only from a Modesty that fled publick Applause after the performing Noble Actions) out of an *Honest Disobedience*, as I may say, refus'd to keep the Silence he enjoined them : For after he had done such Wonderful things, and no less Good and Beneficial, than Great and astonishing, they could not, they would not consent they should be smothered ; that that which was Praise-worthy, should go away without Praise ; that that which deserved so well of the World, should not be known to the World ; and they even contested with our Lord in this matter, as 'tis said *ver. 36*. By how much the more he charged them to keep Silence, by so much the more a great deal they publisht it. 'Tis reported that *Virgil* condemned his incomparable Poems to the fire, and that this endeared them the more to Posterity ; men setting a Value on them afterwards, not only because they were Excellent, but because they were Preserved. And the People in like manner here set a higher Rate on those Miracles our Lord sought to Conceal, because he sought to Conceal them ; more industriously endeavoured to make them Illustrious, because they were condemned to Obscurity and Oblivion ; to pay them their due Honour, because it was denied

denied them. When the *Pharisees* out of Envy urged our Lord to rebuke his Disciples and the Multitude for crying *Hosanna* before him, he said unto them, *If these should hold their peace, the Stones would cry out* : And if the People had not done him the Right they did, the Stones would have proclaim'd his Glory ; and I look not upon their words in my Text, as proceeding from the Spirit of Opposition and Contradiction, but from the Spirit of Grace and Truth, even from the Inspiration and Dictate of the Holy Ghost himself. *He hath done all things well : he maketh both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak.*

Before I proceed yet to the Division, it will not be amiss to premise some things more particularly both concerning the Words, and the Speakers of them. And the Words, in the first place, are plainly a Justification of our Saviour from the mouth of the People, their Verdict given upon him in Opposition to the Censure of their Priests and Rulers. But of What are they a Justification ? Of his Innocent and holy Conversation among men ? There was no need of that, *He went about his whole Life*, as St Peter says, *doing Good*, conferring Health, as well as Faith ; Curing, as well as Converting men : and though the Malice of his Adversaries joined with the Malice of Hell at his arraignment to bring an Accusation against him, they found none. There was as little need also of their Justification of his Miracles ; for they were wrought in the face of all *Judea* ; and the *Sanhedrim*, as well as the People, confest them ; *What do we do ?* (say they, *John* 11. 47.) *for this Man doth many Miracles !* Of what then was their Justification ? Not so much of his Life and Miracles, as of the Divine Power or Principle by which he wrought all that he did.

There was a Division in the Thoughts of men concerning him, upon the Sight of his works, and some said, *He was a Good Man, and others again, Nay, but he deceiveth the People*; secretly intimating, that every One that made a holy Show, was not a holy Person; that every Worker of Miracles, was not a Messenger of God's; but many times the most seeming Instruments of Heaven, were indeed Agents and Instruments of the Devil. In these Extremes of a good and bad Opinion, the People adhered to the most Favourable, concluded, *that he was a Good Man, and no Seducer*; that a *Great Prophet was risen among them, and that God had visited his People*. And their [*omnia bene*] in my Text, [*he hath done all things well*] points not so much at his Morality, as at his Mission from God; at the Truth of his Miracles, as at the Truth of his Pretences, *viz.* that all he taught and did, was by the Power and Spirit of God.

Secondly, The Persons that pronounc'd this Sentence, were the *Multitude*; the Judgment proceeded *ex ore populi*, from the mouth of the People: But it was ne'er the worse for that; what is to be concluded upon the Sight of an undoubted Miracle, may be believed as well, nay perhaps better, from the impartial Opinion of the People, than from the biass'd Reasonings of the Great Ones: in those things where Common sense is a sufficient Guide, 'tis safer many times to submit the Tryal to the Country, than to the Bench; to honest and plain Dealing, than to Wit and Learning; for too often it comes to pass, that the Politicks of Persons in high Place extinguish their Ethicks; and that the Truth of Religion is corrupted for Reasons of State: As may be seen in the Church of *Rome*, where Truth holds always the second place to Interest, and is frequently on its account

count allow'd no place at all. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* saw the same Miracles, which the People did ; but while they were ambitious to be Teachers themselves, while Vain-Glory, Envy, and other by-Respects possess'd them, they were not Converted, but hardened by them, *John* 9. 24. when our Lord had cured one that was born blind, the Pharisees said to him, *Give God the Praise, we know this Man is a Sinner* : But the Person cured (that was one of the People, and unconcern'd in their Pretences) pronounced, *If he were not of God, he could do nothing*. Again, *Matth.* 12. 22. when our Lord healed another that was blind and dumb, and possess'd with a Devil, the Pharisees said, *This Fellow doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils* : But what said the Multitude on the other side ? *Is not this the Son of David ? i. e.* the Great Prophet or *Messiah* that was to come into the World ? Such were the Collections of a Simple and Sincere People free from Envy and Malice. We owe the Growth of Christian Religion to plain honest Men, that heard the Gospel with disinterested and unprejudiced Affections, and clos'd with it, when they saw it consonant to Right Reason ; and *Christ* found at first but few of the Great or Learned that were fit to be *Evangelists*, or yet Disciples ; 'twas three hundred Years before any Scepter submitted to *Christ*, and none were so fierce Opposers of the Faith in the Infancy of it, as the Philosophers. But the Ignorant People that *knew not the Law*, as the Pharisees reproach'd them to weaken their Testimony, convey'd to us the Knowledge of the Gospel ; and in my Text, and many places beside, it may be truly said, *Vox populi, Vox Dei*, the Voice of the People, was the Voice of God.

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O how happy and blessed were this Nation, if it had a People of the like Temper ! that without Prejudice and Prepossession, without Siding and Faction would embrace Sound Doctrine, and bear Testimony to it by their peaceable and holy Lives ; be profitable Hearers of the Word, and not, like the Pharisees, affect to be Teachers of it ; Followers of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and not think they are all *Christs* and *Apostles* themselves ; believe, because the first *Evangelists* were Fishermen, that therefore all Fishermen and Fishermen-like are *Evangelists* ; because God can enable the most Unlearned and Ignorant to be Expounders of his deepest Mysteries, that therefore the most Ignorant and Unlearned are the best Expounders of them ; in a word, because want of Scholarship is no Obstruction to God's Omnipotent Power, that 'tis therefore the highest Qualification of a Person to preach. Alas, my Brethren, though the Multitude could give Testimony to *Christ's* Miracles, they could not preach *Christ's* Sermons ; though the People could say, Diseases cannot be cured, Devils cast out, the Dead raised to Life, by a Word speaking, unless a Divine Power accompanied that Word : yet even the Apostles were not able to understand the Prophecies which related to our Lord's Person and his Kingdom, till he interpreted to them the Scriptures concerning himself ; and as it was a Speech of Ingenuity to say, *He hath done all things well : he maketh both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak :* so it had been no less than a Prodigy, if the People had taught the Pardon of Sins through the Blood of *Christ*, Justification through Faith, or any other revealed Doctrine. When therefore the People in these Days take upon them to condemn the Doctrine and Worship of the Church they were bred in, to
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reject all Antiquity, and to expound the hardest Scriptures without Learning by their New-Lights, 'tis not enough for them to say, The Apostles, who were Handy-Crafts men like us, did such things in the Jewish Church before us, unless they can also shew the like Warrant and Commission from Heaven which the Apostles did, namely, unless they can speak all Tongues, cure all Diseases, utter such Wisdom, as all the Learning in the World cannot withstand. For we must not take out-of-Fashion Hats and Coats, rude Behaviour, *Thouing* and *Theeing* their Betters, for Miracles and the Seals of a Divine Calling; accept of Ignorance and Presumption, for Gifts of the Holy Ghost; Non-sence and Dreams of Inspiration, for Inspiration. In the days of the Prophet *Zechary* there arose a Sort of Mock-Prophets or Teachers like these, who having no Divine Gift to countenance their pretended Mission from Heaven, apishly imitated the Outward Garb and Free Speech of the True Prophets. And the like Entertainment which the People of God gave to those Impostors, ours deserve to receive. For 'tis recorded, *that the very Father and Mother, that begat the False Prophet, said unto him, Thou shalt not live, for thou speak'st Lyes in the Name of the Lord: and they thrust him through, and made him ashamed every one of his Vision, and that he had prophesied: so that they wore Rough Garments no more to deceive, but were constrained to say, I am no Prophet, I am a Husbandman: for men have taught me to keep Cattel from my Youth, Zech. 13.*

To come at length to the Division of the Words, they offer these two things in general to our consideration: 1. Our Saviour's Performance, *He made the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak.* 2. The Verdict or Testimony of the People upon it, *He hath done all things well.*

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In our Saviour's Performance we may consider more particularly: 1. The Substance of it, Giving of Hearing, and giving of Speech. 2. The Ceremonies or Circumstances which he used in giving them, set down *ver.* 33. the Touch of his Finger, his Spittle, the lifting up of his Eyes and Sighing, and the Word he utter'd, *Ephata*, or be opened.

The Testimony or Verdict of the People offers also three things to our consideration. 1. The Appellation they give our Lord, *He*, or this Man. 2. The Kind or Nature of their Verdict, 'twas an Approbation, that *he had done Well*. 3. The Extent of their Approbation, that *he had done All things Well*. I begin, first, with the Substance of *Christ's* Performance.

Giving of Hearing, and giving of Speech:

Deaf and Dumb are in Effect one and the same Infirmary, Evils so complicated, that one is a necessary Consequence of the other, and the Word in the Original *κωφος* signifies both Deaf and Dumb: to cure also the one, is to cure the other, *i. e.* he that opens the Ear, does with one and the same Act so far release the Tongue, as to put it into a Capacity of recovering Speech. But yet the People here very properly express these as two distinct Cures: for though that which makes a Bar on the one Sense, ties a Knot likewise on the other, yet they are really two Impotencies, and the Operation of our Lord was, as I may say, a Single Double Miracle; Single, considering the necessary Complication of the two Evils; Double, considering the opening of the two Doors, the Door of Audience, and the Door of Utterance; and the People with good Reason Separated, as well as Extolled, the Fact, *viz.* that our Lord, with the simple

simple Clue or Key only of his Finger did perforate and discover all the subtle Wards and Meanders of the Ear, and the hidden Vaults of the Mouth; and so rectifie the Imperfections of them, that Sound entered into the one, and was formed and made to issue Articulately out of the other. The Senses may receive Help from the Arts and Inventions of men, but not Creation; the Orator, with a Pebble in his mouth, might help his Pronunciation, and by an Instrument conveying Sound, the Hearing may be assisted; but a total Privation, or rather Privative Abnegation or Original Impotence, that derides the Operations of the Surgeon, and the Prescriptions of the Physician, and the Cure can never be wrought, but where the Finger of Christ is the Probe and the Salve.

But I have not yet declared the Greatness of the Miracle; it was still more wonderful, if, as Interpreters conjecture, and not without reason, *Christ* did not only open the Ears and loosen the Tongue of the Impotent Person, but also enrich his Understanding; instructed his Mind, as well as healed his Senses; bestowed on him Knowledge, which through defect of Hearing, must needs be defective in him; conferred on him Words, as well as the Power to pronounce them; and Conceptions, as well as Words; thus giving him *linguam & linguam*, not only a Tongue, but also a Language: infusing into his Soul the Dictionary or whole Treasure of Words in a Moment, together with a Competency of Principles and Notions; which, even to those that have the Use of the Organs, is *opus dierum*, a Work of Time and Labour to acquire; after the Miracle done upon the Deaf and Dumb Man, there was need of Study and Industry to inform him; when the Surgeon had done

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his Work, there was place still for the Teacher. As may be seen by him that was newly recovered of his Blindness in the following Chapter, *I see*, says he, *Men like Trees walking, i. e.* I see, but I know not well what I see; I cannot distinguish Men from Trees, but that they walk. Those that are endowed with the Senses they were not born with, cannot immediately make a Right Use of them: and upon this account divers Counterfeits have been detected, while they have too soon confessed a distinct Knowledge of Objects and their Accidents after their pretended Recovery; shewing at once both their Fraud and Ignorance, by their too quick revealing their Experience. This therefore, I say, greatly adds to the Glory of the Miracle, if it were indeed so, that the Organ and the skill; the Faculty, and the Learning were both given together.

We are taught from hence these two Lessons: 1. That whatever our Wants or Distresses are, however amazing and seemingly insuperable our Dangers, yet to trust and confide in that Omnipotent God, to whose Power nothing can give check; who when the Senses could not be cured, could yet create them; and when there was no Remedy in Nature, could find one by a Miracle! 2. We are taught no less to adore his Bounty and Goodness, who knows no other Measure of Giving, but to supply all that is Necessary: who to the Impotent Man gave Senses, to his Senses added Knowledge, to his Knowledge Faith, to his Faith Salvation. For God deals no otherwise with men at this day, if they reject not his Grace; whoever are his Patients, he desires should be also his Disciples; upon whomsoever he bestows Corporal or Worldly Blessings, he is more ready to bestow Spiritual and Heavenly. And let this suffice

to be said of the first Particular, the Substance of *Christ's* Performance, his giving of Hearing, and giving of Speech. I shall consider in the next place, the Manner of his doing it, or the Ceremony and Circumstances which he used in performing his Cure. The first of which was

The Touch of his Finger.

But you will say what need was there of this? *Do but speak the Word,* as the Centurion said, *and my Servant shall be whole* : so do but speak the Word, and the Deaf and Dumb shall hear and speak : *Christ's Ephata* had been enough, without his Touch ; the Breath of his Mouth could have wrought the Cure, without the help of his Finger. 'Tis true, and in many of his Miracles our Lord used only his Voice, he restored *Lazarus* to Life, still'd the Tempest, cast out Devils merely by his Word. But yet frequently he did his Cures by his Touch, he took the Damsel that was dead, by the hand, and she arose ; and he laid his hands upon the Sick, and healed them. For some reason therefore it must be, that not only at this time, but at many others, he performed by many Circumstances, what he could have performed, if he had pleased, by fewer, or by none at all.

And the first Reason might be this, That the Beholders might see, the Cure came from himself, from no Confederacy with Spirits, or any External Power, and from thence might have a greater Veneration both of his Person and his Doctrine; be perswaded, that what proceeded from his Mouth must be True, when they saw what proceeded from his Body was Divine.

The second Reason might be, That by a greater
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Number of Circumstances the Miracle might make a deeper Impression, and be longer remembered both by the Person healed, and by the Standers-by; remain a Monument, as well as a Demonstration of his Power and Goodness. God, in the days of *Moses*, gave not only his Precepts in Writing, but expos'd them to the Touch and Sight of his People; made his Commandments dangle between their Eyes in Phylacteries, and trail at their feet in Fringes, that what they would have forgot in Books, they might remember, wearing as Dresses and Ornaments. And 'twas for a like reason to this, that our Lord instituted Baptism, and his Last Supper: for he could have convey'd to us the Pardon of our Sins, and the Grace of his Holy Spirit, without the Ceremonies of Washing, and breaking of Bread: but he thought fit to adde these Performances, not only to make Spiritual things more plain and conceivable, but to make Transient things more permanent; that his Benefits being thus rendred *operatiora*, more full of Business and Toil, they might be also *memorabiliora*, more full of Remark, and better fixt in our Minds.

The third Reason why our Lord wrought this Miracle by his Touch, and such a Singular Touch, as thrusting his Finger into the Ear, and putting his Spittle upon the Tongue, might be; because these Actions have a Resemblance and kind of Similitude to the Means, which Art ordinarily uses in like Cases; Obstructions are opened by Perforations, and Lenitives cause Lubricity and Volubility; and the more to set off the Greatness of his Power, he would have it seen, that he could cure by the Figures and Images only of those things, by which Surgeons and Physicians exercise their Narrow and restrained Skill: he used, as one says, *Metaphoram in facto*, a Metaphor

phor in Fact, employ'd his Finger as a Probe, and his Spittle as an Ointment. It was a wonderful Performance to cure an Original Dumbness and Deafness by any Means; but to do it by such things, as were indeed No Means, that was more Wonderful. To proceed, the second Ceremony *Christ* used, was

The Lifting up of his Eyes, and Sighing.

A Look to Heaven and a Sigh are the Prayers of them, that have no other Opportunity to make their Supplications. *Levavi oculos meos*, says the Psalmist, *I lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills, from whence cometh my help.* That little Motion of the Prophets, the looking only for Help in Faith, was his Impetration of it: and *S^t Paul* says, *By Sighs and Groans the Spirit makes Intercession for things that cannot be uttered, [or distinctly exprest.]* Thus our Lord, by casting up his Eyes to the Throne of God, made his Petition; and his Sighing, was his Strong Intercession. Not that the Father did not hear him readily, and at all times, as himself said, but he pray'd after this manner, to shew the Correspondence he held with Heaven, and that the People might see, that the Miracles which he wrought were the Return of his Prayers; that as his Finger toucht the Ear and Tongue of the Impotent Man, so his Request toucht the Throne of God. But we must look upon this, and all other Ceremonies which *Christ* used in working his Miracles, as things no way needful to what he did, but needful to our Imbecillity; to help our Faith, not to help him in his Performances; they were like the Voices that came to him from Heaven, *not for his own Sake, but for the sake of the Standers-by.*

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The third Circumstance, was the Word our Lord used, *Ephata*, or be opened. And if the former Circumstances which he made use of, express'd any seeming Weakness or Insufficiency, this last declared the Fullness of his Power and Omnipotence; it being a Word like that which God spake at the Creation, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*; a Word pronounced as Imperatively and Magisterially, and which found as ready Obedience; it was *dictum factum*, as 'tis said, a Word and a Deed. The Poets tell of a famous Enchantress, whose Spells were so dreadful, that the Celestial Orbs yielded Obedience to her — *carmenque timent audire secundum*, and durst at no time stay her second Charm. But though this were but a Fiction or Juggle; yet so it was that all the Creatures, without any Demur, speedily and constantly obeyed the Injunctions of our Lord, and never stay'd his second Command; whether they were Elements, Diseases, or Devils themselves. And as when he commanded the Storm to cease, the Mariners ask'd amazedly, *What manner of Man is this, that even the Sea and the Winds obey?* So the Multitude were no less astonish'd here, when they saw not only the deaf Elements obey, but Deafness it self to lend an Ear; when I say upon the pronouncing only of this single powerful *Ephata*, they beheld the Doors of Audience and of Utterance both fly open; the Dumb to speak, and the Deaf to be so quick of hearing; their Mouths were also open'd in Lauds and Praises, and with one Universal Consent they gave our Lord this Testimony or Elogy: *He hath done all things Well: he maketh both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak.* Which brings me to my second General Part, The Verdict and Approbation of the People. But the time will not suffer me to go through
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the Several Stages of it; I shall therefore only make some Use of what I have said, and conclude at present.

We have heard, that our Lord (not only in the present Miracle before us, but in many others) used divers Ceremonies, though he could have wrought them, if he had pleas'd, without so much as seeing the Persons, as he did the absent Servant of the Centurion: But while such Ceremonies edified the Beholders, instructed their Ignorance, made a deeper and more durable Impression in their Minds of his Glorious Works, while they added Authority to his Words, and Veneration to his Person, he disdain'd not to serve himself with them. And though the Wisdom of our Church (for the like prudential Reasons, *viz.* to explain her Doctrines, to adde Order and Beauty to her Worship, to stir up Zeal and Reverence in her Worshippers, and the like) has admitted of some few Ceremonies: yet they lye under so great a Prejudice to many, that to name them only without Detestation, is enough to render the Person that names them Detestable. But what our Lord has so far approved of, as to practise, ought not to be detested by his Followers.

It will not be possible in the few Minutes remaining to me, to treat fully of this Subject: But what are Ceremonies, which are so cry'd-out against, but the Outward Expressions of the Faith and Devotion we have Inwardly in our Hearts to God? As the Apostle says, *With the Heart we believe unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation*: For we may manifest our Belief by Actions as well as by Words; neither is it material by which we do it, so we do it sincerely; and whatever Exceptions can be made against Ceremonies, may be made
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also against Words, *viz.* that they may be Abused: But then as men reject not the Use of Words, because some do Deceive with them: So neither ought they to reject Ceremonies, the Outward Expressions of a Devout Soul, because they are used by some Superstitiously and Idolatrously.

And the true Cause indeed of so manys abhorring Ceremonies, is the Excessive and Idolatrous Use of them in the Church of *Rome*, the multitude of their Cringes, Bowings, Crossings, Prostrations, Sprinklings of Water, tinklings of Bells, censuring and kissing of Books, Images, and Altars, changing of Vestments, exposing of Reliques, lighting and extinguishing of Candles, &c. all in one and the same Service, insomuch that the Worship of God, among so many busie Fooleries, is the least part of it self: and Religion so far from being Explained and Adorned by these things, that 'tis Disfigured, and rendered only more Dark and Mysterious. Which while some have taken just offence at, they have run as much into the other Extreme, and condemned all Ceremonies in general, and endeavoured to justify their transport against them by Scripture; Unskilfully or Unsincerely wresting, whatever they find spoken against the Old Jewish Ceremonies, to the Christian: Whereas the Apostles Quarrel against the Jewish Ceremonies, was not for any thing which they had in Common with those that are used at this day in the Church of Christ: but for their being directly Contrary to Christianity: they were Types of Christ and of the Gospel, and while they were kept on foot, they denied that he was come into the World. However therefore that Ceremonies have been abused, or that it may be said, that the Outward Worship of the Body, if compared with the Inward

Inward Worship of the Soul, is but as the Outward Court of the Sanctuary to the Holy of Holies: Yet if we consider rightly of the Exterior Acts of Devotion, they are no less the Acts of the Heart, than the Interior: for as the one are the Elicite, the other are the Imperate Acts of the Soul; and, though in a Degree once removed, may be as Cordial and Sincere as the other; and are in many respects not only Useful, but Necessary in Religion.

For first, It is not possible to perform the Publick Worship of God without them, the assembling in his House, in his holy Name, and on his Own Day, the bowing our Knees before him, and lifting up our Hands and Eyes to Heaven, and the like, are all Ceremonies, Outward Expressions of the Faith, Reverence, and Dependence we have on God: and those that are so Unreconcil'd to some of these things, necessarily and unavoidably practise others of the like nature to those they condemn. And what reason can these Men give, when they can dishonour and sin against God with their Body, why they may not also honour him with it? When with their Body they can commit Idolatry, why with their Body also they cannot perform a Legitimate and holy Worship? The Body is to be Partaker with the Soul hereafter in Glory, and no reason can be given why it should not now join with the Soul in the Duties of Religion. How graciously did God accept and reward the Formal, Outward and Ceremonial Humiliation of that Hypocrite and Idolater *Ahab*? for his Fasting, and putting on Sackcloth, and walking softly, (upon hearing the Judgments denounced against him by *Elijah*) God revers'd his Judgments! *Seest thou*, says God to the Prophet, *how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not*

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send the Evil in his days, &c. If men rightly considered these things, they would not come into God's House, as if they came to affront, and not to adore him, neither baring the Head, nor bending the Knee; out of a foolish fear to commit Idolatry, deport themselves in his Presence like Idols; and as if they came there to be worshipp'd, and not to worship.

2. Ceremonies are useful in regard of the Persons that use them: for they are Wings to their Devotion, and raise it to a higher Pitch, than the quiet Actings of the Heart alone can do. And as a man by vehement Speeches and Emotions of his Body may chase himself into a greater Degree of Anger: so by devout Gestures in Prayer he may heighten and enflame his Zeal.

3. Ceremonies are useful in regard of the Beholders. The reverent, solemn, and holy Rites of the Church being suited to the Majesty of the Deity that is worshipp'd, excite Faith and a more awful Regard in the Hearts of men; and 'twas for this very Reason, as I said, that our Lord used so many Circumstances and Ceremonies in the working of his Miracles. For such Visible Performances are many times more Efficacious Lessons, than long Harangues; and though men affect to appropriate the term of Edification to Sermons only, the External Parts of Religion are not without their Edification too; and a holy Practice or Custom may make a smarter Impression on the Soul, than the Inculcations of a flat and heavy Sermon.

4. Ceremonies are useful in regard of the Light they give to many Doctrines, which being assisted and seconded by such Sensible Circumstances, as Exhibit them to the Eye as well as to the Ear, they are the better explain'd, and establish'd in the Understanding.

derstanding by the help of two Senses, as Differences in Law are by the Mouths of two Witnesses; and we may term the Ceremonies which accompany the Precepts of Religion, the *Jael*, or Nail that fastens the Substance of them in our Minds, as the holy Matron of that Name rivetted the temples of *Sifera* to the ground: Or we may call them the *Maforah* of the Church: for as the Jewish *Maforah* by an exact and critical Calculation of the Number of Words, Syllables, and Letters in the Scripture, hedg'd in the Text both from Mutilations and Additions: So Ceremonies often empale the Substance of Religion, and guard it from Innovation and Corruption. And may we not then justly condemn the Perverseness of those, that make such Out-cries against such Useful, such Innocent, nay such Necessary things, as Ceremonies? who decry the same things for Superstition, when used in the Church, which they allow to be Wisdom, when practis'd by our Saviour? But Wisdom is justified of her Children impartially, and those that have the Ingenuity and Goodness of the People in my Text, and no Taint of Pharisaical Pride and Hypocrisie, will approve the Rites of our Church, as well as her Doctrines; and say, *She has done all things Well*, She has made the Unanimous in Faith, Uniform in Worship; added to the Beauty of Truth, the Beauty of Holiness; neither dressing up the Service of God in that Strumpet-like Attire, which the Church of *Rome* does; nor stripping it into that deformed and fordid Nakedness which is seen in the Fanatick and Congregational Assemblies.

The Tenth Sermon.

MARK vii. 37.

—*He hath done all things well : he maketh both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak.*

I Observed in the Testimony or Verdict of the People three things : 1. The Appellation or Denomination they give our Lord, *He, or This Man.* 2. The Kind or Nature of their Verdict, it was an Approbation, *That he had done Well.* 3. The Extent of their Approbation, *That he had done All Things well.* I begin, first, with the Appellation or Denomination they give our Lord,

He, or This Man.

The Peoples Appellation here is but a lame and imperfect Acknowledgment of *Christ*, it expresseth only one half, and the meanest half, of his Condition. It
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was not the Style in which Believers in after-times spoke of him; who never mentioned him as mere Man, but as God, or the Eternal Son of God. When the Primitive Christians met in their early Devotions before day, *laudes Christo, tanquam Deo, canebant*, they sung Hymns to *Christ*, as to a God, as a Heathen could bear witness. But however the Appellation of the People was less Honourable, at the present it was accepted from them, and registred as a Proof of their Ingenuity, that they gave *Christ* the Due of his Actions, though under an imperfect Style of his Person. God opens the Eyes of mens Understanding, and cures the Infirmities of their Souls, by Degrees: as *Christ* in the following Chapter cured the Blind mans Eyes, who first saw Men like Trees, and afterwards Men like Men. 'Twas enough, upon our Lord's first entering on his Prophetick Office, and preaching to the World, that the People received his Doctrine, and conceived rightly of his Miracles, though not of his Divine Nature; that they acknowledged him to be a Good Man, though not the Son of God Incarnate: which at that time was not understood even by the Apostles themselves.

But then that which was an Ingenuous Expression in those days, would be an Injurious or Blasphemous one in these; if men should now so far debase *Christ*, as to restrain him to his Humane Nature only, and deny his Divine: as the *Socinians* do, who allow no higher Title to be due to him, than *this Man*, *this Man* has done all things well, *this Man* was born of a pure Virgin, *this Man* died, rose from the Grave, ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right-hand of God, and the like. And 'tis not without good reason, that some have doubted, whether those that are of this Perswasion, are to be numbered among
Christians;

Christians ; who, after so full and perfect a Revelation of *Christ*, apprehend him yet so imperfectly ; who with a greater blindness, if not malice, persecute his Divinity, than the Scribes and Pharisees did his Humanity ; use greater Endeavours to destroy the *Son of God*, than they did to destroy the Supposed *Son of Joseph and Mary*. I say though [*He or This Man*] was a pardonable appellation from the People, who were yet but Raw Auditors of the Gospel, yet 'tis intolerable, coming from Grown Christians ; and such *Elementarii Senes*, Grey-headed Ignorants, as stick still at the first Rudiments of the Faith, deserve to be expell'd the School of *Christ* for their *Non-proficiency*. Saint Paul, 1 Cor. 1. 12. sharply reproves Believers for saying, *I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas, I of Christ* : and not only for their Schisms, but chiefly, for levelling our Lord with his Servants, and making him only the Head of a Sect, a Partial Minister of mens Salvation, when he was the Sole Author and Finisher of their Faith.

But what shall we say then of those Fanaticks of later times, who deny not only the Divinity, but Humanity of *Christ* ; affirm, that what the Gospel says of God Incarnate, is not to be understood Historically, but Morally ; not of a Particular Single Person, but of all that are True Believers ; and that themselves are the *Godded with God, those in whom God is Man'd, or Humaniz'd*, as they delight to Cant. Acknowledge no Saviour or Redeemer of the World, but make themselves all to be *Christs* ; assume his Attributes and Prerogatives, pretend to be without Sin ; Not that they do not do those things, which the Worst of Men do, but the Spirit of God, as they fantasie, doing all things in them ; *to say they could sin, were to say that God himself could Sin* : how-

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ever therefore all Breaches and Transgressions of the Law are *Criminal in other Men*, in *them they are only Nominal and Seeming Sins*, *Sins improperly and falsely so called*, from the *similitude they bear to them*. And on this account they reprove none among themselves for committing the most heinous and flagitious Crimes, but for shewing Sorrow for them after ; it being not Sin, in their Opinion, but a Remorse for Sin, that is the Sign of an Unregenerate State, the discerning a Difference between Good and Evil ; which they call the *Relish of Eves Apple still remaining*, and endeavour by all means to eradicate ; perswading themselves, that when they have destroyed all Sense of Sin, they are arrived to the highest Point of Saintship and Perfection, to the very State of Innocence in which *Adam* was created, the State in which he knew no Evil. Miserably dreaming, because *Adam* knew no Difference between Good and Evil Experimentally before his Fall, that he knew not any Intellectually. And thus we see, not to believe Rightly of the Person of *Christ*, is, in truth, not to believe in *Christ* ; to deny either his Humanity or Divinity, is in Effect not to be a Christian. It is not only necessary therefore to receive all that is delivered By him, but also all that is delivered Of him ; to acknowledge him to be our God, as well as our Saviour ; and to adore him, as well as to be Instructed by him. To say in these days, with the People in my Text, *He (or This Man) hath done all things well*, were no less than Sacrilege ; when our Style ought to be, *The Eternal Son of God, blessed for evermore, hath done all things well !* And so I pass to the Second Particular, The Kind or Nature of the Peoples Verdict, it was an Approbation,

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He hath done Well.

The Peoples Approbation here was rightly grounded, they concluded with good Reason, That he that had made the Deaf and Dumb to hear and speak, was a Prophet, and no Deceiver; that he whose Works were so Mighty, must himself be Holy, and his Words True. Miracles are infallible Signs of a Divine Person, Irrefragable Testimonies of a Man of God: as the Widow of *Zarephath* rightly concluded, when *Elijah* restored her dead Son to Life, *Now*, says she, *I know thou art a Man of God, and that the Word of the Lord in thy Mouth is Truth*: and likewise *Nicodemus*, when he said to our Lord, *Rabbi, we know thou art a Teacher come from God; for no Man can do the Miracles thou dost, except God be with him*. Our Lord himself made use of this Argument drawn from his Mighty Works, as his last Appeal for the Truth of his Divine Mission: says he, *If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not: but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the Works*. Thus even licencing the Infidelity of men, in case he had not performed Works above the Power and Ability of men. At the first production of the Creatures, there were certain Properties or Qualities implanted in them, as Descending to heavy Bodies, Ascending to light, moving Circularly to heavenly, &c. Now when it comes to pass, that Heavy things move Upwards, and Light Downwards; when Water, a fluid Body, is made a Pavement or a Wall; the Fiery Furnace a Refrigeratory, as *Nebuchadnezzar's* was to the three Children, *circa frigidis capillorum globulos innoxium luxit incendium*, says *S^t Jerome*, the harmless Flame did only shine upon, not singe their curled Locks.

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When, I say, the Courses of Nature are thus changed, and its Laws inverted, *when the Creature is fashioned again anew*, as the Author of the Book of Wisdom speaks, *and is made to observe Particular Commands*, it is a Kind of Second Creation : For none can change the Laws of Nature, but the God of Nature : Well therefore did *S^t Augustine* say, *Habent Miracula linguam suam, & opera sunt & argumenta*; Miracles have a Tongue and speak, and they are not only Works, but Arguments. To give a man Speech, that was born without it, is even of it self a Kind of Speech, the Speech no less than of the Almighty : for God appears not Personally to converse with Men ; but such as these are his Utterances of himself to the World : neither did the Voices that broke from the Clouds at the Baptism and Transfiguration of our Lord, saying, *This is my Beloved Son*, more clearly and intelligibly declare to the Hearers, who *Christ* was, than the Voice of God, in every Miracle he wrought, pronounc'd the same thing ; but on all his Mighty Works was engraved in bright and shining Characters, *This is my Beloved Son*, and again, *This is my Beloved Son, hear him !* The first Way, I say, was not more convincing to mens Senses, than the second was argumentative to their Reason ; and there is but One and the same Proof of the Deity, and of the Truth of *Christ's* Pretences ; and they are either both True, or both False ; he that gives Hearing to the Deaf-born, is a Righteous Person, or he that made the Ear, is nothing ; he that gives Speech to the Dumb-born, has done well, or he that made the Tongue is a mere Chimæra.

But yet this is to be received with some Caution : for there are two Uses which God makes of Miracles, The one to plant Faith, And the other to try the Constancy

Constancy of Believers: And as God sent *Christ* and the Prophets before him with the Power of working Miracles for the first End: so he permits *Anti-Christ* and other Impostors to work False Signs and Wonders for the second End, and those so seemingly true, as to deceive, if it were possible, the very Elect. You will say then, Which of these two shall have the Preheminence in our Belief? how shall we know to which to adhere, both performing the same Works, but drawing several Ways? Must these *Miracle-Workers*, as one asks the Question, *take place as Women in a Bake-house? the first Comer, the first served?*

There is a Rule set down *Deut. 13. 1.* how we are to carry our selves in this Case, and to judge of Miracles. *If there arise among you a Prophet, says Moses, or a Dreamer of Dreams, and gives you a Sign or a Wonder, and the Sign or the Wonder comes to pass, whereof he spake unto you, saying, Let us go after other Gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them, you shall not hearken unto the Word of that Prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you.* Now the Wonders and Signs performed by *Anti-Christ* and other Impostors are all to this Purpose, To draw men from the Worship of the True God, or at least from some Fundamental Points in Religion: For as *S^t Paul* says of *Anti-Christ*, *He opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself to be God.* When we hear therefore any Creature whatsoever bring such a Doctrine as this, *Ego altissimus*, that himself is the Supreme God, or that usurps the Power and Prerogative of the Supreme God, forgives Sins, not Ministerially, but Absolutely, grants Dispensations to commit them, abrogates Divine In-

stitutions, makes New Articles of Faith, assumes to himself Infallibility, and other Divine Properties, claims not only an Exorbitant Jurisdiction above his Commission in this World, but extends it even into the other, &c. as the Popes of Rome do; let the Miracles they or their Followers work be never so astonishing, yet they are to be held accursed by us, and we may safely pronounce, They are not Good Men, but Deceivers of the People.

But then *Christ's* Miracles tended quite to another End, to ratify and establish all holy and Divine Truths, especially that *Summa Veritas*, that Supreme Truth, which was the Test, not only of all other Truths, but of Miracles themselves, viz. *That there is but One God, and he alone to be worshipp'd*: So that his Doctrine was a Proof of his Miracles, as his Miracles were a Proof of his Doctrine: neither will this reciprocal Proof, if well observed, be found to be that *Circular Way of Proof* so much condemned in Logick, in which the Effect is made the Cause of the same thing, which is its Cause, which cannot be in Nature. However therefore the Grand Exception, both of the *Jews* of old, and of these days, lyes in this Point, That notwithstanding *Christ*, by the Confession of their own Rulers, wrought many Miracles; yet he was not to be hearkened to, because he destroy'd the Worship of the True God, i. e. abolish'd those Rites and Ordinances, which were immediately delivered from Heaven; this their Exception is vain and without Reason. For *Christ* did not, as they say, destroy the Worship of the True God, but reformed and improved it; took away only the outward *Cortex* or Husk of Religion, to shew more plainly the Substance of it, and wherein its Weightier Duties consisted, removed the Shadows, drew the Veil

Veil from off *Moses's* face, altered such Inferior Alterable things in God's Service, as were foretold should be altered. And then he did this by the most clear and authentick Commission from Heaven that could be shewed, by the Broad Seal and Patent, as I may say, of Miracles: and the Ceremonial Law was removed by a no less Glorious Ministration, than 'twas at first given. Now these things being so, that a Prophet's Doctrine, Miracles, and Sanctity of Life concur (especially, as I said, when he secured the Essentials of Religion, and above all others that Great Requisite, *de Unius Dei Cultu*, of the Non-Avocation of men from the Worship of the One and True God) even by the Sentence of the *Sanhedrim* he ought to have been received as sent from God. We may therefore conclude, that the proceeding of the Elders and Rulers against our Lord, was perverse and wicked, and the Judgment of the People a right Judgment; upon good Warrant we may justify their Justification, and say, In pronouncing *he did All things Well*, they also *spake Well*. And so I pass to the third Circumstance I observed, The Extension of their Approbation,

He hath done All things Well.

The Judgment here of the People, I say, was a Right Judgment: but 'twas only so, as the Young man's in the Gospel was, who came running to *Christ*, and kneel'd down to him, saying, *Good Master, what shall I do to inherit Eternal Life?* Whose Words and Behaviour, though they attributed to our Lord no more than his Due, yet he gave him a Check of Instruction, because he ascribed Absolute Goodness to him, which belonged only to God, when he apprehended.

prehended him to be no more than a Man. So though the Peoples Approbation was Right both in the Nature and Extent of it, *That our Lord had done Well, and that he had done All things Well* : yet 'twas not without Exception. For though our Lord had evidenced even to the most Scrupulous, that he was a True Prophet : yet the People not understanding him to be *that Great Prophet* that was to come into the World, *the Messias and Son of God*, they could not give him so Large a Testimony as they did : for even those that were True Prophets sent by God, *did not do All things Well*, but all of them had their Infirmities, and committed Sin. So that the best that we can say here of the Universal Extent of the Peoples Approbation, is, That they had better Luck in it, than Skill ; *Et æquum licet statuerint, haud æqui fuerunt*, that though they pronounc'd a Right Sentence, 'twas not with a Right Knowledge ; but as Physicians say, An Errour in the first Concoction is never corrected in the second : so the People not rightly understanding *Christ* in the first place, their following Praises of him were not right ; but as far as they came short in his Title, when they stiled him *this Man*, they over-shot themselves in their Testimony, when they said, *He hath done All things well*.

Neither is this a Nice and trifling Cavil or Observation, but a Point of great Importance in the Consequences of it. For if from a few Instances of Goodness a Universal Goodness may be concluded : if from some Specious or astonishing Actions a Divine Approbation may be allowed, a *Theudas* or *Judas Gaulonites* may pass for the *Messiah* ; *Abbaris*, for his dexterity of catching an Arrow flying in the Air, may pretend to *the Divine Honours* decreed him by
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the *Scythians*; and *Simon Magus* to the *Godhead* given him at *Rome*, for his Skill in *Magick*; the *Heathen Demons* challenge their *Deities*, who were all Deified for some Extraordinary and Uncommon Performances. But I shall chuse to insist on more known and familiar Instances. Many here present may remember, that in the breaking out of the late Great Troubles of this Kingdom, there were Persons that pretended to stand up for the Interest of the Nation, to reform Abuses, to be the only Publick Spirited Men and Good Patriots; and the People, because they pleased them in *Some things*, thought they might trust them in *All*; and idoliz'd Traytors and Rebels, and put it into their Power to plunder and tyrannize over themselves, to ruine the State, and at last murder their King. Again, while the same People in like manner doted on the *Fansy'd Holiness* and Endowments of some Teachers and Pastors, because they saw them Zealous and frequent Preachers, sharp Reprovers of Vice, bold Opposers of those in High Place, and Pretenders to suffer for Truth and Righteousness sake, they concluded from these things *That they were Good Men, and that they did All things Well*: but as soon as these had gain'd their Point, they threw off their Vizors, and shew'd themselves Hypocrites and Schismatics, Trumpets to Rebellion, Misleaders of the People, and Corrupters of their Allegiance.

We see therefore that to infer from some Particular Acts a Universal Goodness, is no less an Unsafe, than an Unsound Way of arguing. He prays well, he preaches well, he is ever arraigning Sin, and the like: but, *cætera sint paria*? do all things correspond? does his private Practice comport with his publick Demeanour? his inward Goodness with his outward Austerity? as he is Severe against Sin, is he

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merciful to Sinners? as he is assiduous in his Calling, is he Obedient to his Governours, and faithful to his Prince? as he exhorts the People to Church, does he not debauch them with Factious Doctrines when they come there? as he is not Scandalous in his Conversation, so is he not Morose, Proud, or Covetous? In a Word, does he conform his Whole Life to the Tenor of the Gospel? does he indeed do *All things well? All things?* that is, in a Moral Sense, and according to the Measure of a Sincere Honest Man? If he does, let him carry away our *Enges* and our *Sophos*, our Approbations and Applauses. But if he does only two or three of these things, and those hypocritically and upon Design, to give credit to a Cause, and to carry on an Interest, the *Pharisees* made long Prayers, that they might devour Widows houses; and *Herod* heard *John the Baptist* gladly, and did many things upon his preaching, but continued still to live incestuously with his Brother *Philip's* Wife, and at last gratify'd her Malice with the *Baptist's* head. If a few Good Actions may set such a Colour and Varnish upon mens Lives, that they ought to be accounted holy Persons, the Scenes in our Theatres may pass for the Glorious Heavens, and solid Edifices they represent, when they are nothing but patcht Clouts, and pasted Papers, painted and shewed to an artificial Light. *Lucian's* Image of *Jupiter* in Gold, outwardly of a Majestick Form grasping a Thunder-bolt, may be allowed to be the Deity that rules the World, though it be nothing within but Dust and Cobwebs, Soder and Cramps of Iron, which hold the miserable Machine from falling asunder. I say, if we thus make Saints from Shews and Seemings, we may fill the *Kalendar with Red Letters*, but we shall adde but few Names to the *Book of Life*.

Life. I shall therefore conclude this last Particular with our Lord's advice, *John 7. & 24. Judge not according to Appearance, but judge righteous Judgment.*

And now what Use shall we make in general of the Peoples Testimony and Approbation of our Lord ? shall we likewise justify his Actions, assert his Divine Mission, and say, *He hath done all things well ?* To praise *Christ*, to speak Honourably of him, to vindicate him from the Aspersions of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and the like, is our bounden Duty ; but all of us here present are his Disciples and Followers, all of us *Christianissimi*, Pretenders to be the Chiefest and most Eminent of his Worshipers ; and we acknowledge not only *that he spake the Truth*, but *that he is the Truth*, even the *Eternal Logos* : and to take upon us to pass a humane Judgment on him, and to censure him as one Man censures another, to say, *He is no Seducer, or the like*, were so far from honouring him, that it were to be Irreverent and Insolent towards him, and to set our selves above him ; for the Justifier is Greater than the Justified. How then ? must we celebrate his Eternal Generation, and Descent from his Father's Bosom for our Redemption, in *Magnificats* sing his Victory over Death and Hell — ? Yes, this we must do, but not this only, for these are still but Empty Words, we must adde Deeds to our Praises : Obedience to our *Magnificats*, Duty and Service to our *Psalms* and *Hymns* : the Praises of a holy Life to the Acknowledgments of a thankful Tongue. To praise God only with the Voice, is to praise him like the Trumpets of the Sanctuary, or the Organs of our Churches : Or as the Psalmist calls upon *the Sun and Moon, Fire and Hail, Beasts and feather'd Fowls to praise him*, which all do in a Figure, and after a manner, in that they

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are the Works of his hands, and proclaim his Wisdom and Power; thus also the Devils and Damned Spirits praise him, while their Sufferings and Torments declare his Justice. But we are to praise God, not only passively, occasionally, and instrumentally, like Inanimate, Brute, or accursed Creatures: but intentionally, primarily, and affectionately, as becomes Rational and Intellectual Beings, Obligated and illuminated Persons and Believers. And as the Faithful do best evidence their Faith by their Works, so they best evidence also their Good Opinion of Christ by their Works, *viz.* by following his Precepts: then we give our true Approbation of him, when we transcribe his Actions and tread in his Steps: 'tis the Life of a man that expresses his Thoughts of Christ; if that be righteous and conformable to his Gospel, he has set to his Seal that he is the *Messiah* and *Son of God that was to come into the World*, proclaims indeed, *That he has done All things Well*. But if his Ways are Wicked and repugnant to his Gospel, let him praise him never so industriously, never so ambitiously, with never so loud Vociferations, he does but in Effect say, *He was an Impostor, and deceived the People*. For as St Paul says of False Teachers, *Tit. 1. 17. They profess that they know Christ, but in Works they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and to every Good Work reprobate*: So we may say of these false and counterfeit Extollers of Christ, that in Words they Approve him, but in their Works they Condemn him, being abominable, disobedient, and to every Good Work reprobate. How can a Strumpet praise Chastity? Or the Sor that is fill'd with Drink like a Sponge, say any thing in the Commendation of Sobriety? Vertue is praised of her Followers; and the best Verdict we can pass on Christ,

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is to imitate him in all holy Conversation ; to live after his Example, is the highest *Encomium* we can give him.

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, Worship, and Thanksgiving, this Day forth and for evermore. Amen.

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AMOS iii. 2.

You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities.

THIS Expression of God's [*knowing*] a Thing or Person, is taken in Scripture in several Senses. Sometimes it is meant literally and in propriety of Speech, of the Knowledge of mere Perception and Discerning; as when *David* says, Thou *knowest* my thoughts long before: and *St John*, God is greater than our hearts, and *Knoweth* all things, *i. e.* perceiveth and discerneth all things. Sometimes again it is taken Figuratively, not for mere Perceiving or Understanding a thing, but for the Owning, Approving, Favouring, Blessing of it, or the like: because these follow upon God's perceiving a Good thing. Thou hast *Known* my Soul in
adversity,

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adversity, says the Psalmist, *i. e.* Own'd, protected, and delivered it. Again, the Lord *Knoweth* the way of the Righteous, and the way of the Ungodly shall perish. *Knoweth* their way, *i. e.* prospereth, blesteth, and will not suffer it to miscarry like that of the Ungodly.

And this last Way did God *Know* Israel above all the Families of the Earth: for he knew them not only with a Perceptive Knowledge, so as he Knows equally all the Nations of the World, but Owned, favoured, and was beneficial to them. As the Sun beholds some Countries with a more bounteous Aspect than others, not only shedding on them Light and common Influences, but enriching them with the Noblest Plants, Minerals, and Precious Stones: Or as he is feign'd by the Poets to have beheld *Theffaly*, when he was in love with *Daphne*,

— & terrâ figit in unâ
Quos mundo debet oculos —

he fixt his Eyes on one particular Soil, which ought to have cheered the Universe. So God, as if he had been Enamoured on *Israel* of all the Nations of the Earth, set his Heart on them alone, to the seeming Contempt of all beside, he revealed himself to them in a more Especial Manner, made a Covenant with them, gave them Laws, and heaped Blessings upon them, vouchsafed to be their King and Governour in his own Person, conducted, fed, protected them by by Wonderful and Supernatural Means; and whereas he governed the other Nations by his Ordinary Invisible Power (as if he had erected a New Providence in the World for them) he brought all things to pass in their behalf by Miracles. And thus though
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by Nature *Israel* was no better than other Nations, by his Grace and Favour God made them Excel them.

But then though it be the highest Advantage, To be *Known* by God after a particular and Extraordinary Manner, yet if a People shew themselves not worthy of it, it ceases to be an Advantage; nay it turns to their greater Evil. 'Tis not enough therefore, that men are *known* by God, to make them happy, but God must also be *known* by them, they must understand his Will, what is pleasing and displeasing to him, and hold a reciprocal Correspondence with him by Faith, Love and Obedience. For as St *Peter* says of Apostates, *It had been better for them, not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment*: So it had been better for *Israel* if they had not been the Favourites of God, than after their being so, by their Sins to lose that Grace; for Sins against Favour are greater than Sins against a Commandment; Men in this Case being not only Disobedient, but Ungrateful; and whereas God would possibly have past by the Offences of less Obligated Persons, he will call such as these to a strict account; what he would have pardoned in the Heathen, that were Strangers to him, he will punish in his own People, whom he has *known* by so many Great and Distinguishing Benefits. *You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore will I punish you for all your Iniquities.*

The Words afford us this Proposition or Observation, That whatever People God blesses above others, if they shew themselves Ungrateful by sinning against him, he will punish them above others. Which Proposition I shall handle after this manner:

I. Prove

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I. Prove and confirm the Truth of it, that it is indeed so. And

II. Shew the Reason and Equity of it, why it should be so.

I. To clear and confirm the Proposition.

Sin, as soon as it is committed, is followed by Punishment, except prevented by Repentance ; Punishment follows it, I say, sometimes with Slow, but always with Sure Paces, till it over-takes it ; Vengeance attends it, as the Gaoler in some Countries does Malefactors, who is bound in the same Chain with them : Or is coupled to it as the After-Birth is to the Birth : For as in Natural Productions, after the Birth of the Creature, there is a second Birth or Protrusion ; so there is in the bringing-forth of Sin, it is no sooner produced in the World, but there succeeds a Title to Punishment so close upon it, as if it came from the same Womb. *If thou dost Evil*, says God to *Cain*, *Sin lyeth at the Door*, i. e. the Punishment of Sin is at hand to seize thee : and says our Lord, in regard of mens proneness to Wickedness, *It is necessary that Offences should come*, but then also that 'twas as necessary, That upon them Woes should come : and the Scripture makes it a piece of Injustice to detain them, no less than a Sin, to spare Sin. *The Wages of Sin is Death*, says *S^t Paul* : and as when the Wages of a Labourer or the Pay of a Souldier is detained, a Mutiny or Clamour is raised : so when Punishment, the Wages of Sin, is with-held, a Cry is sent up to Heaven, and God's Justice is continually solicited, till Guilt receive its due Reward.

This, indeed, to the Men of this World is the *primum incredibile*, one of the most Incredible Doctrines

crines that is taught : they see not the Link, which by God's appointment, couples Sin and Punishment, and because the Act of Sin is transient, and Vengeance deferred, they conceive the Guilt, and the Bitterness of Death contracted by it, are also transient ; and that they can confute the whole *Hypothesis* from their own Experience ; they having not only run on in Disobedience for many Years together, but encreased their Wickedness, as well as continued in it ; proceeded from sinning with fear, to sin with presumption ; from offending God, to the affronting him ; from breaking his Laws, to the deriding of his Worship, and the denying of his Deity ; and yet, say they, we have found none of that Vengeance that is spoken of, no, not the least Disturbance in our Evil Ways. But is it then no Vengeance, to let a Sinner run on in the Ways of Perdition without any Check ? Is the Blindness and Darkness of the Soul, and Hardness of the Heart, no Judgment ? Is the falling from the Condition of a Man, to that of a Beast, the despising all things Spiritual and Noble, and finding no relish but in things sensual and Brutish, no Judgment ? Is God's giving them up thus to a Reprobate Mind and Vile Affections, condemning them to love Necessarily and Finally, what they have so long loved Perversely and Wilfully, no Judgment ? Is the visible trailing after them in this manner the Chain of Damnation, and going on singing and dancing to Hell, without apprehending the least Evil, no Judgment ? What Sadder Arrest can there be of God's Wrath, than such an Exemption from it ? What Plague or Punishment sent upon Less Offending Sinners half so dreadful, as the Calm and Peace which these boast of ? But let it be as these Men imagine, that all these things we speak of are Dreams ; that

Obdurateness and Insensibility in Sinning is no Punishment, and that nothing deserves the Name of Vengeance, but what is Corporal Loss of Life or Liberty, deprivation of Health, Estate, and the like. How do these know they shall escape these Evils? Those of this Way are for the most part Young, or in the Strength of their Days, and perhaps God has determined before they depart hence to make them as Eminent Examples of his Wrath, as they have been of Disobedience.

I should think my Hour well bestowed, to remove this one Practical Dangerous Errour, to open mens eyes, that they may be convinced, That Sin is a Serpent that does *insidiare calcaneo*, lye in the Path, and mortally bite the Heel of the Sinner; and that he runs not on faster in the Ways of Disobedience, than he does in those of Destruction: but it is not my Business at this time, the Proposition which I am to prove, concerns not the Punishment of Sin *Absolutely* considered, but *Comparatively*, viz. *That Sin in some Persons or People is more heinous, and more severely punished, than in others*; that where God has conferr'd more Signal and Illustrious Favours, there he punishes Sin with more Signal and Exemplary Vengeance; and his foregoing Bounty despised, adds Weight to his future Severity.

And this Truth is written in so Great Characters, and so legible through the Whole Series of the Chronicle of Scripture, even from the Creation, that I shall not need so much to prove the Proposition, as to refresh your Memories, by setting before you things already known. The first Man of our Race was the first miserable Example of this Truth; and he that first brought Sin into the World, first also left the Confirmation to us of the Fatal Consequence of
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it, when committed against an Extraordinary Grace. *Adam* was created after God's own Likeness, in perfect Righteousness and Holiness, and not only with the Knowledge of his Laws, but with a Power and Ability to keep them; he was made to Excel all Sublunary Creatures, and had Dominion given him over them; he was plac'd in a furnish'd World, fruitful without Labour, delightful without Satiety; and the Continuance of this his Felicity was put into his own hands, he was not Subject to Death, Infirmities, or Misfortunes, like his Posterity: nay, 'twas in his power not only to have Prolong'd his Felicity to all Eternity, but to have Improv'd it. Greater Favours God could not conferr on Flesh and Blood, on a Creature lower than the Angels. But whither tended the Collation of all these Benefits, when *Adam* rebelled against God? Only to his greater Misery, the Punishment of his Transgressions was as Eminent as his Priviledges and Graces had been; his ensuing Calamity, as his foregoing Prosperity. *The day thou eatest of the forbidden Tree, says God, thou shalt dye the Death.* What Death? All manner of Deaths, *Death Temporal, Death Spiritual, Death Eternal; Death to Nature, Death to Grace, Death to Glory!* The Sin was but Single, but the Punishment inflicted was Three-fold: like a Stroke with a Trident, which makes a Triple Wound; and the Blow fell not only on himself, but on all his Posterity. Never any Sin since his had the like Recompence of Reward; because none since *Adam* could sin against so much Bounty.

I shall give you but one Instance more. We know by how Strange and Unexpected a Favour *Saul* was promoted to the Throne of *Israel*, who being sent in quest of his Father's Asses, found a Kingdom; God

advancing him above all his People in Honour, more than he Excelled them in Stature. But he proving after this Ungrateful and disobedient to the Commandment of God, falling no less than thrice into that Common Fatal Errour of Faithless Princes, to relye on Humane Policy, more than on the Divine Support: on the Favour of the People, than on the Favour of God; and seeking to establish his Kingdom by Bloud and Sacriledge, rather than by Innocence and Justice; as if the Power that gave him a Throne could not uphold him in it; God's Indignation against him was as Great, as his Prevarications had been. And then what did all his antecedent Favours profit him, but to enhance his following Punishment? Which was such, as when we read it, we cannot chuse but pity, though it were the Lord's doing. For he rejected *Saul*, as he was rejected by him; he withdrew his Holy Spirit from him, and sent an Evil Spirit to vex him in the room of it, a Spirit of Jealousie and Frenzy, which periodically posselt him, and clouded all his Felicity and Glory; disinherited his Posterity, dethroned, in a manner, himself while he was yet alive, by causing another to be anointed King in his days. And after he had suffered him thus to survive a few Years a dreadful Spectacle of the Divine Wrath, he stirr'd-up the *Philistines* against him, and when their Host appeared, and he most needed it, bereaved him of his Kingly Courage and Magnanimity, refused to direct or answer him by his Oracles. In which distressed and disconsolate State, all Heavenly Comfort being silent, and *Saul's* guilty Conscience only loud and clamorous, over-whelmed with Sorrow and Despair, under a Disguise and the Covert of the Night, with two Attendants only, he repaired to a poor Witches Cell

Cell to enquire the Fortune of his Life and Kingdom, and where God met him, as I may say, also in Disguise, made use of the Witches delusive Arts, to give him a Real Prediction of his near-approaching Overthrow, and inglorious Death: So that partly broken with Sorrow, and partly weakned through Hunger, he fell into a Swoun, and was sustained by the Bread and Counsel of the Silly Woman, the next day putting a Period to his Life and Miseries. What Invention of Romance, or Fiction of Poetry can parallel the Calamity of this once so Glorious and Heroick King? And if any ask, Why was all this? how came the patient Spirit of the God of Mercy to turn into Fury, like that of the Person he punish'd? Because the Sin of *Saul* was not only a Sin against God, but against a Benefactor; and the wonderful Bounty God had shewed in bringing him to the Throne, pull'd upon his Ingratitude and Infidelity this wonderful Severity and Displeasure.

And as this is God's Dealing with Particular Persons, so 'tis the same with Whole Nations: Of which we shall not need a further Example, than that before us of *Israel*. In the foregoing Chapter the Prophet denounces God's Judgments against the Neighbouring Kingdoms for their Sins. For three Transgressions and for four, says he, God will punish *Damascus*, and chiefly for their Cruelty. For three Transgressions and for four God will punish *Gaza*, and again for their Cruelty. For three Transgressions and for four God will punish *Tyre*, because they kept not their Brotherly Love. And so on against the rest: But when he comes in the last place to *Israel* and to *Judah*, their Transgressions being not inferior to those of the Gentiles, he intimates that heavier Judgments were laid up in Store for them, and that they should not escape so easily

easily as the others ; he casts their Ingratitude for their former Benefits into the burden of their Guilt ; *their forgetfulness of God's bringing them out of Egypt with a high hand, and destroying the Nations before them ; his raising up their Sons and Daughters to be Prophets, and their Young men to be Nazarites.* Shall the People that have not known God be judged for their Sins, and shall not those to whom he has revealed his Laws and his Righteousness, on whom he has heaped his Blessings, be judged more severely ? *He that knoweth his Masters Will, says our Lord, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many Stripes.* As the Hea-then therefore were chastised for their Offences, *Israel* was utterly ruined and Un-nationed.

And this was not only God's proceeding under the Law, but 'tis the same still under the Gospel : For he has *Known* or favoured Believers in *Christ*, not only above the Gentiles, but even above the *Jews* themselves ; and if *Judah* be trod down, and the Temple destroyed for the Sins and Ingratitude of that People, the seven Churches in *Asia* lye under a Sadder Desolation at this Day for their Disobedience to *Christ*, Travellers being scarce able to discern so much as the Places where they stood. These Examples of God's Wrath both on Single Persons and whole Nations, teach us this Lesson, That 'tis never so dangerous to offend against God, as when he has been Gracious to us ; his former Benefits being so far from privilegedging any to transgress, that he is sure to punish those most, he has done most for. But 'tis not enough to shew the *quod sit*, the Truth of the Proposition, that it is so ; I proceed in the next place to shew the *cur sit*, the Reason, Equity, and Merit of it, why it should be so.

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The Reason why it should be so.

This Position, *That God punishes with heavier Judgments, those whom he has chosen to fix his Favours on, if they offend against him, than others*; seems to have something in it contrary to the Nature and Disposition of Men, who are apt to delight in the Persons, on whom they have placed their Benefits; to love the Creatures of their Advancing, no less than those of their Begetting: So *S^t Augustine* affirms the like Disposition is found in God; who, speaking of his Rewards to Men, says, *Coronat opera sua, non merita nostra*, God crowns his own Gifts and Graces, not any Merit he finds in us: and *Moses* makes it a Plea for his Mercy to *Israel*, that *he would not destroy them, after he had done them so much Good*; alledging his former Bounty, as a Motive, for his Pardon and Forgiveness.

In satisfaction to this, I answer: We must consider in God's Benefits to men *not only his Love, but the Purpose of his Love*; he confers his Gifts upon us with a Design to make us more holy Persons, and for the Favours he bestows he looks for a Return of Obedience and Righteousness on our part; and where he fails of this Return, he does not only cease to give, but hates in a manner his Gifts, and destroys them for the Parties sake on whom they were bestowed. Says *S^t Paul*, *Ephes. 1. 3. God has blessed us with all Spiritual Blessings in Christ, (and why?) that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.* But then if this Design be defeated and made void, and *we are not holy and without blame before him in love*, we may assure our selves, that all his purposed Bounty is also made void; and that is hated which

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is loved ; thought fit to be destroyed, that was intended to be built ; and the rather, because it was not found fit to be built.

There are three things which are observed to provoke Anger and Indignation in the most Patient. First, *An affront to a Mans Person* : all vilifying and despising, as *Aristotle*, the best Describer of Passions, says, being a just Cause of Choler. Secondly, *The Loss of a Mans Labour* : as when a Professor of some Curious Art arrives to great Perfection in it, and reaps no Advantage by it ; is Excellent, but yet notwithstanding Poor and Neglected ; ravishes all (for Example, with his Musick or Poetry) and wants Bread : this will make him hate his Muse, and break his Strings, seek his Revenge upon the Instrument of his Profession, because he cannot reach his unfortunate Profession it self. Thirdly, *The Loss of a Mans Love and Good-Will* exasperates him more than all the rest, and turns his Kindness into Fury. Neglect of Worth, and Personal Contempt, though they be deeply resented, yet they touch not so to the Quick, as the Contempt of Affection, for indeed the Contempt of Affection includes in it both the Contempt of the Worth, and of the Person ; and he that despises a mans Love, despises all that he has, and all that he is. But what then must the Provocation be, when all these Causes concur ? as they do, when either a Nation, or a Single Person returns God Disobedience after he has shewed them his Extraordinary Mercies and Favours.

For, First, *His Person is affronted* ; Regard is not had to the Great God of Heaven and Earth condescending to do Good to his own Sinful Creatures ; and the Greater the Person is, the Greater is the Contempt, and consequently the Greater Anger and Evil Effects of it, Revenge and Punishment, may be expected.

expected. Says St Paul, *Of how much Sorer Punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trod under foot the Son of God? viz. than he that has only trod Moses under his feet?*

Secondly, God loses his Labour on such Persons, and that enrages him yet more: he likens Israel to a Vineyard, on which he had bestow'd great Cost and Husbandry; fenced, and gathered out the Stones, and planted it with a Choice Vine: but after all, when he lookt for Grapes, behold, it brought forth Wild Grapes! Grapes which instead of delighting the Taste, set the Teeth on Edge! What does he do therefore upon so unexpected a Frustration and disappointment of his Hopes? Why, as a Person much Incensed, shews many times a Wild and Frantick Behaviour; so God puts on a seeming Transport and Fury, breaks out into a Tragical Song to vent his Indignation. *I will sing*, says he, *a Song of my Beloved touching my Vineyard*—— in which he utters both his Displeasure and his purposed Revenge. The Issue of God's Labour lost upon a People, can be no less than the Perdition or Loss of those People; First, He complains, but after that, lest he should seem to be Master'd or Mock'd by his own Creatures, he sends Destruction and Desolation on them.

Thirdly, His Love and Kindness is despised, which provokes his Anger above all the rest. When God has shew'd Singular Goodness and Mercy to a Nation, eminently delivered them, or otherwise Blessed and prospered them, and they return him nothing but contempt and Neglect, disregard his Laws and violate his Commandments, esteem his Worship a Burden, and his Service a Slavery; reflect upon their late Infelicities and Deliverances as the Common Vicissitudes of the World, or only as False, or more Wary and

Masterly Steps made by themselves in Points of Policy. Thus, like *Israel*, sacrificing to their own Net, and burning Incense to their Drag: Or as another Prophet representeth them; ascribing all the Good things they received from God, to the Idols of *Canaan*, to *Baal*, and *Moloch*, and the *Queen of Heaven*: So these ascribe to *Chance* or *Fortune*, to *Good* and *Bad Seasons*, to *Humane Prudence* or *Folly*, all their Prosperity and Adversity, and not to Divine Providence. When, I say, the Goodness of God is thus injured, his Benefits over-seen or denied, his Judgments contemned, his Righteousness hated, and his Deity set at naught, what wonder is it, if his Love be also turned into Detestation and Hatred. When Men hate, they wish the Person hated may perish; they wish it, I say, because their Power does not always answer their Anger: but God, to whom it is as easie to destroy, as to be angry; when he hates, he sends certain Ruine and Destruction on the Offenders; he punishes with the same Facility, as he says in my Text — *I will punish you for all your iniquities.*

And now to hang our Ancestors Picture in our Gallery, if I may so allude, to set the Actions of *Israel* by ours, that we may draw some Instructions from them, I could almost wish that this Proposition, (*Whatever People God has blessed above others, if they sin against him, he will also punish above others*) were not so great a Truth, so Ominously it sounds: For if there be a Nation upon the Earth that God has *Known*, i. e. distinguish'd by his Singular and Signal Favours from all others, it is this of ours: *St Paul* reckons it among the highest Priviledges of *Israel*, that they had the *Oracles of God*; though we may say of them, they were Oracles indeed, if their Darknes be compared with the

the Clear Light of the Gospel revealed to us ; Christ was preached to them, and not preached ; but if to any of us he be hid, 'tis through wilful and affected blindness, and, as the Apostle says, *He is hid only to those that perish*. And when through the Inundation of Barbarians and Ignorance, and the worse Inundation of Corrupt Manners, Errours and Superstition over-spread the Face of the whole Christian World : upon the first Dawning again of the Light of the Gospel, and the shaking off of this Darkneſs, while the Abominations of *Rome* were yet ſeen and deteſted by all Diſcerning and Conſcientious Believers, and the Fermentation of the Truth in mens hearts was not ſettled again upon the Lees of Secular Policy and Intereſt, we were reſcued by God's Goodneſs from the Yoke of *Anti-Chriſt*. But not to look back to the Benefits of remote Ages, but only to thoſe we our ſelves have been immediate Partakers of, and are accountable for. What Mercy was ever more Glorious than the Reſtauration of our King and Church in theſe our Days, not to name our later, though Signal and Illuſtrious Deliverances ?

But as God has known us in all our Diſtreſſes and Adverſities, and wrought ſuch Miracles of Mercy for us, how have we received them ? What Miracles of Thankſgivings and Duty have we returned to him ? We have wrought Miracles indeed, but Miracles in an Untoward Senſe, Miracles of Impiety and Ingratitude. As God reſtored our King and Kingdom to their former Splendour and Glory, and all of us to our forfeited Peace and Proſperity : multitudes have endeavoured, by their Atheiſtical Opinions, to depoſe God from his Kingdom in Heaven, and Government over the World. As God brought us out of the Saddeſt and Darkeſt Night of Adverſity, into the bright Sun-ſhine of Felicity, by a Power and

Goodness like that by which he brought Light out of Darkness at the Creation : there are those that have turned Light into Darkness, *i. e.* denied and obscured all the Light of Divine Truth and Revelation : again, that have turned Darkness into Light, made the Sins of Darkness become Sins of Light and Noon-day ; those Sins which were reproachful and crept into Corners in all Ages, to be of Credit and Reputation in this. These, together with the rendering things Venerable and Sacred, ridiculous and contemptible, are the Miracles of these times ! Saint Peter says, *In the last days shall come Scoffers, walking after their own Lusts.* These two Sins, *Walking after their own Lusts*, and *Scoffing at things Holy*, go together : and 'tis no wonder that this dissolute and profligate Age should mock at Religion and at all things Serious ; mock at their Reason, and degrade it below their Sense ; mock at the Immortality of their Souls, and level themselves with the Beasts ; mock the Kingdom of Heaven into a Dream, and the Torments of Hell into a Fable ; the Creation of the World into a piece of Non-sence and Impossibility ; and why ? Because 'tis more rational to believe the Doctrine of Atoms ? that the orderly and beautiful Frame of Heaven and Earth, and all that is in them, were produced by the casual shuffling together of I know not what little Particles, than by the Contrivance of an infinitely Wise and Powerful God ? Or again, that the World was from all Eternity, and that Men and all other Creatures grew at first, like Plants, out of the Earth, and the like, rather than that they were created ? No certainly, these things are not so easie to be conceived and digested by Reason, as the Doctrines that are rejected : but the most Monstrous Opinions are easier to be embrac'd by Wicked men, than such Truths

Truths as cannot be held, together with their Vicious Lives ; as the Apostle says, *They live without God in the World*, and they cannot endure to hear, that he made it, and will judge it ; that their Bodies should dye, and their Souls survive ; their Pleasures come to an End, and their Guilt remain ; that there should be a Resurrection to Punishment, and not for the Execution of their Lusts. *Julian* the Apostate, to justify his revolt from the Faith, said of the Gospel, ἀνέγνων, ἔγνων, ἠγάπησάω, I have perused it, I have understood it, I have despised it. Alas, if he had approved it, he must have condemned himself ; if he had acknowledged the Gospel to be Divine, and the Way to Bliss, he must have confess'd himself a Monster, and the most Accursed of Mankind. But that which is so great a Prodigy, is, that the least Night or Darknes of Atheism should be seen in this Kingdom, where the Gospel shines in its Meridian ; that Apostasie should be found, where so many glorious Manifestations of God's Power and Goodness are found ! We have heard, that the Ungratefully Wicked, the Wicked after much Good done for them, are in greater Danger of God's Wrath and Displeasure, than the Simply Disobedient. What then can we expect our Portion should be, when after so many Unparallell'd Benefits, we have shew'd our selves not only Unthankful, but Atheistical ? not only Transgressors of God's Laws, but Renouncers of them ? Says our Prophet, Verse the 5th, *Will a Lion roar in the Forest, when he has no Prey ? i. e.* will he roar to no purpose, when nothing provoketh him, when he designs nothing by it ? So when God threatens Sinners, does he mean nothing ? are the Dreadful Denunciations of his Judgments mere Empty Noise ? Again, in the Verse before my Text, says the Prophet,

phet, *Can two walk together except they be agreed ?* i. e. can it be expected, that God should go along with men, and bless them, unless they be righteous ? that he should Favour them, if they live in Rebellion against him ? If we will not have God our Enemy, after he has been our Friend ; and therefore our Enemy, because he has been our Friend ; if we will not have him send Evils on us, because he has sent Blessings on us so long in vain : we must rise in our Duty to him, as he exceeds in his Mercies to us ; improve in our Obedience, as he enlarges in his Bounty : And then he will adde Grace to Grace, and Blessing to Blessing, till he has brought us to the Perfect State of Blessedness, even to the Unspeakable Joys and Glory of his Heavenly Kingdom. Whither God of his infinite Mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ bring us all. To whom be ascribed all Honour, Glory, &c.

The

The Twelfth Sermon.

PSALM CV. 44, 45.

*And he gave them the lands of the
Heathen, and they inherited the la-
bours of the people :
That they might observe his Statutes,
and keep his Laws.*

THIS long Psalm is nothing but an Enumeration or Recital of the Favours and Benefits conferr'd by God on *Israel*, even before it was *Israel* ; beginning with the first Promise of the Land of *Canaan* made to their Fathers, when they were yet but a Family, and not a Nation ; Wanderers from one Kingdom to another People, Sojourners in all places, where they found admittance, but Inhabitants of none. In which fleeting weak Condition, and obnoxious to many Evils, God greatly preserved them, as we read *ver. 4. He suffered no man to do them wrong, yea he reproved Kings for their sakes.*
And

And he delivered them not only from the Violences and Outrages of Men, but exempted them from the Judgments which himself sent on the Nations where they sojourned. For when a Dearth, as 'tis said *Gen. 41.* was on all Lands, *i. e.* the adjacent Countries, *Canaan, Syria, Arabia, and Idumea,* by a Gracious Providence he sent a Man before them to introduce them into *Egypt*, where he had made Provision of Bread for them: And though he suffered them in this place of Sojourners to be made Bond-men, yet when the determined Time of such his Counsel was expired, he raised up another Man, even *Moses*, who by ten Miraculous Judgments made the stubborn Heart of *Pharaoh* stoop, and let them go free. And thus he brought them out of *Egypt* with a Mighty Hand, they being but *imbellis turba*, an unwarlike Troop, a mixt Multitude of Men, Women, and Children, and conducted them with a Supernatural Cloud, which was a Shadow by Day, and a Light and Bulwark by Night: and when the Host of *Pharaoh* pursu'd them, he open'd them a Passage through the midst of the Sea, but overwhelmed the *Egyptians* presuming to follow them. Their Way then lying through the Wilderness, a place by Nature barren of all Provisions, he made it fruitful by Miracles; spread a Table for them with Dainties, not afforded from the Earth, but from the Clouds; commanded a River to flow out of the Stony Rock, and to journey with them forty Years to refresh them and their Cattel. And when they drew near unto the Borders of the Promis'd Land, he inspired a third Heroick Person to be their Military Leader, and by his Prowess and Conduct cast out the Heathen before them, and, to crown all his foregoing Mercies, he put them into actual Possession of the Land of *Canaan*; a Land that

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was the Glory of Lands, ready till'd and cultivated, built and furnisht to their hands, with all manner of rich Moveables and Commodities, *Dominis parantur ista, serviunt vobis*, Provisions made for the Canaanites, but enjoyed by the Israelites.

And now if any ask, Why was all this Munificence and Bounty showed on this People? what was the Design of the Almighty in making such a Profusion both of natural and supernatural Favours? The Declaration of that is reserved to the last place, suspended to the End of the Recital of the Benefits, that it might look back to all that went before, and make a deeper and more lasting Impression in the hearts of the Receivers, and it was naturally this, *That they might observe his Statutes, and keep his Laws*. All the Families of the Earth had corrupted themselves again after the Floud, before God, and were either fallen into Atheism or Idolatry: but God determining in his Mercy never utterly to destroy Mankind again, resolved to take a contrary Course, to woo and soothe them to Vertue and Righteousness by his Favours; to add Benefits to the authority of his Commands; Blessings to the Obedience of his Laws; Blessings, I say, and Benefits, not only in the ordinary secret Course of his Providence, but, as Occasion required, Openly and Miraculously: that Men might see 'twas wiser to worship the Living God, than to be Idolaters or Atheists, more advantageous to do his Will, than to bow to Stocks and Stones, or to be Slaves to wicked Spirits. And he made Election of *Abraham* and his Seed after him to experiment this his Gracious Method on: but with the Design, that as he revealed his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness to them, they should be as a Nation of Prophets, Holy in themselves, and Preachers of Righteousness

teousness to the rest of the World. The *Israelites* thought, all the Wonders that were wrought for them, were only to pleasure and profit them, but they were principally to make known the Glory of God; and were Sermons, as well as Benefits; designed not so much to gratifie their Carnal Affections, as to train them up in the Obedience of God's Laws. *And he gave them the lands of the Heathen, and they inherited the labour of the People: that they might observe his Statutes, and keep his Laws.*

I shall observe in the Words these two things:

I. How or which Way God did confer the Lands and Labours of the Canaanites on the *Israelites*, viz. *He gave them.*

II. Why or for what End he gave them, it was for this one Great End, *That they might observe his Statutes, and keep his Laws.*

In the handling of the first of these, The Manner or Way of God's conferring the Lands and labour of the *Canaanites*, (there being many collateral Circumstances in it which highly magnifie his Gift) I shall not only reflect on the bare Donation, but also on the concomitant Circumstances.

I. He [*Gave*] the Lands.

In the Translation we use in the Common-Prayer-Book, 'tis said they [*took*] the lands and labours of the Heathen in possession. But the Expression of their [*taking them*] in one Translation, and God's [*giving them*] in the other, amounts to the same thing: for a thing may be [*taken*] two ways, by Force, or by Gift and Reception. Now *Israel* took the lands and labours of the *Canaanites* the second of these two Ways, by Gift from God. 'Twas
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not their own Sword, as 'tis said, or their own Bow that subdued their Enemies, but God that fought their Battels. They took Canaan, as they took Jericho; the Walls of which, when they had walk'd seven times about it, by the miraculous power of God fell down. The Grecians painted Timotheus, the fortunate Athenian Captain, lying cross a River with a Net in his hand, and Cities flowing down the Stream into it, to shew how Easie a Town-taker he was: after the like facile easie Manner did the Cities of Canaan flow into the possession of Israel. And if all Men would consider how they came posselt of the Blessings they enjoy, they would find that even the Greatest of them came to them, in a manner, sitting still and without Pains. We think 'tis we that get them, that 'tis our Wit and Industry that acquire Riches and Honour, our Valour that conquers Nations, &c. but alas, we do but walk, as I may say, about the City, and long enough we might walk, and never take it, if God did not cast down the Walls of it, *i. e.* remove the Obstructions and Difficulties that stand in our way. Who can arrogate to himself that he had a hand in the bringing about the Mercies of the Year 1660, which we this Day commemorate, when all our Endeavours were frustrated, when our Designs came home to us uneffectually, or with the Destruction only of the Undertakers, when the Royal Party grew unactive, and began to despond? Then, even then, when all Humane Power was at a Stand, our King was restored by a Secret and Divine Hand, by means as surprizing and unhop'd for, as undeserved by us: he was not freelier bestow'd on us this Day in his Birth, than in his Restoration.

Secondly, The Substance or Matter of God's Donation to Israel is worthy the reflecting on, he gave them

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them [*the Lands and Labours*] of the Heathen.

1. *The Lands* : The Gift of Lands to a people that were a kind of wandering *Arabs*, and who might have been denominated *Sans-terre*, Without-Land, as a Prince of our own Country was call'd on the same account, was no small Accommodation and Benefit. But then the Land God gave to the *Israelites* was a Land flowing with Milk and Honey, with Oil and Wine, a Land whose Stones were Iron, and the Bowels of whose Hills Brass. For we must not judge of *Palestine*, by what Travellers report of it at this day, since it fell under the Subjection of its present barbarous Anti-Christian Lord, whose Foot treads Barrenness and Desolation where-ever he marches Victoriously ; who ruins Lands, as well as Arts and Sciences ; and puts the Country-men to flight, as well as the Scholar. But *Palestine* must be considered in the State 'twas in at the time God gave it, when not only the Bounty of Nature, but his special Blessing was upon it. And if Good Land be a Good Motive to love and serve God, we of this Nation need look no further for an Argument to do our Duty, than the very Ground we tread on : for that old Verse (*England excels in Mountains, Bridges, Fountains, Fair Churches, Women, Wool*) however comprehensive, falls short in computing the numerous Blessings of this Isle. Our misery only is, that as our most malignant Enemies are forced to confess our Countrey to be *bona Terra*, a good Land, so the most candid Historiographers cannot forbear censuring it for bringing forth *mala gente*, a naughty People, no way comporting with the Excellence of the Soil ; a People that are stubborn and prone to Rebellion, who think Sedition the best Physick for a Sick Government, and Seditious Persons the best Physicians : whereas the Diseases of
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a State were never cur'd by turbulent Spirits, though many States have been subverted by them; and History that tells of so many Kingdoms ruined by Rebellion, records none that was ever reformed that way.

Thirdly, As God gave the Lands, he gave likewise [*the Labour*] of the Heathen into the possession of the *Israelites*: they entred into Houses which they built not, enjoyed Riches which they purchased not, reap'd Corn which they sow'd not: what our Lord said of his Disciples coming after the Prophets to preach the Gospel, *What one man soweth, another reapeth*, was literally true here. The *Israelites* came not into the Land of *Canaan*, as Planters do into a new-discovered Country, *in vacuum*, into a Void and Empty Soil: but as Students into a Colledge, or Infirmary persons into an Hospital, *in plenum*, into an Accommodation of all things Necessary; where the Benefactors have not been only Builders, but Founders of a liberal Maintenance; and provided Subsistence, as well as Reception. 'Tis the happy Lot of many in this Nation to come into the World provided of all things which the Life of Man can need, possess'd of Estates, not got by the Sweat of their Brows, but left them by the Acquisition of their Ancestors, so clear and disengaged, that they seem not to descend to them, as Lawyers speak, *res cum onere*, the Estate with the Burden and Incumbrances, but *res cum sænore*, the Estate with the Emolument and pure Enjoyments of it. And such was the happy Condition of the Loyal Party of this Kingdom, upon the Blessed Restauration of his Majesty, that they were like New-born Heirs to great Fortunes; being not only call'd from a Fugitive Condition abroad, or delivered from Death, or the Apprehensions of Death

or

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or Bonds at home : but had Preferments and Riches, Honours and Dignities added to the Gifts of their Lives and Country : God being not content, in the overflowing of his Bounty, to bestow on us only a Dry-Deliverance, but accumulated on our heads all other Good things. But whereas such boundless and unparallel'd Mercies required suitable Acknowledgments on our Part, the multiplicity and greatness of our Benefactors have made us, like *Israel*, forget our Benefactor; and as they were waiward and froward on every Disgust, and lookt back again to *Egypt*, preferring their Bondage before the glorious Deliverance God had wrought for them : So we, as little sensible of our Wonderful Restauration, upon every dislike to the Government, think better of our past Miseries, than our present Enjoyments; and, which is a Prodigy to hear, join hands with those that were our Oppressors, to bring our selves again into Slavery.

Fourthly, He gave [*Them*] the Lands and labour of the Heathen. The Persons to whom God was so liberal are worthy to be considered. God gave the seven Nations in promise unto *Abraham*, to be made good to his Posterity : but to say nothing of his Posterity, whose Ingratitude is so well known, What was *Abraham* himself, for whose sake *Canaan* was promised, then when God call'd him out of *Ur* of the *Chaldees*? Even an Idolater as well as the *Chaldees*. For we must not take the Tradition of the *Jews* for a current Truth, who, because the word *Ur* signifies Fire, 'as well as it denominates a Country, tell us, That *Abraham's* coming out of *Ur*, was his Escape out of the Flames of Martyrdom, which he was cast into for opposing Idolatry. The *Jews* together with the *Papists*, though they otherwise hate them not only

only as *Christians*, but as *Idolaters*, are always seeking a Reason in Man for the Motive of God's favour to him : whereas when God gives any thing, 'tis not for the Merit of the Person he gives it to. *Yes*, say they, *he gave Abraham the promise of Canaan for his Faith so highly approved of in Scripture* : But who gave *Abraham* that Faith? They say, *He was so ingenuous as to believe upon God's Call*. Ay, but who gave him that Ingenuity? If it were a Good Gift, it came from above. We must look upon all God's After-Gifts, as we do upon those which we first and originally received from him at our Creation, as proceeding from no antecedent merit on our Part that invited them : God gave no man Beauty, Sharpness of Wit, or any other Grace of Body or Mind, for any antecedent Graces that were in him : it were as absurd and ridiculous to say, That any one merited the Preheminences and Advantages he has above others, as to say, he could merit his Being it self before he had one : but as God's Goodness was the Fountain, so 'twas the sole Motive of his Endowments. Let no Man go say this Day among us, That 'twas for his Loyalty, and adhering to the true Religion, when so many were Schismatics and Traytors, that God let him behold the Restoration of the King and Church after their fatal Ruine : but for his own Bounty sake, and the Reasons of his unsearchable Wisdom. For what could it profit any man to hold the Truth in Unrighteousness? to be Orthodox in Profession, as many boast themselves to be, and Ethnicks in Manners? Loyal to their Prince, and Vicious in their Lives?

I shall name but one Circumstance more of God's Bounty to *Israel*, and little more than name it; and that is the Smallness of the Return he required for all his immense Favours, it was only, *That they should live*

live according to his Holy Laws. A performance rather delightfom than burthensom, fo natural and reasonable, that a Wife man would clofe with the Condition, upon the bare hearing it, without Stipulation. *Israels* manner of Tenure of God's Favour was like our Tenure in the Church by *Frank Alms*; who for many comfortable, and too often envy'd Endowments, are obliged only to fend up Prayers and Thanksgivings to God, and to perform fuch other Duties, as conduce to our Eternal Felicity. God's very appointment of fo merciful a Return to *Israel*, was of it felf a Singular Mercy. But becaufe this falls into my fecond General Part, Why, or for what End God gave the Lands and Labours of the Heathen into the Poffeffion of the Israelites, I fhall not prevent my felf by enlarging on it before the time. *And he gave them the lands and labour of the Heathen*——
(Why?)

That they might obferve his Statutes, and keep his Laws.

Statutes and Laws are much the fame in Senfe, and feem here to be but two Names for one thing. Laws being fo called from their binding Authority, and Statutes from their being eftablifht or decreed. Likewise the obferving the one, and keeping the other, are but two Expreffions again of the fame Duty: for by keeping the Laws is meant, that men fhould not wittingly violate them: and by obferving the Statutes, that they fhould not transgreff them through Ignorance or Incogitancy: as *S^t Paul* fays in a like Cafe, *Therefore we ought to give more earneft heed to the things we have heard, left at any time we fhould let them flipe.*

But

But what were the Laws and the Statutes, for the keeping of which, God accumulated so many Extraordinary Benefits on *Israel*? The Jews had three Sorts of Laws, Judicial, which related to their Civil Affairs, the Tryals of Justice and punishing Criminals. Ceremonial, which belonged to Religion, as the Laws of Sacrifices, Observations of Days, Purifications, &c. Thirdly, the Moral Law, contained in the Ten Commandments. The two former Sort, though they proceeded from the same Divine Wisdom, and were established by the same Divine Authority, as the last; yet their Deductions being so remote from their Principles, like the Branches or Twigs of a Tree from the Root, and their Reason and Equity not so discernible, they were enjoyed only as the Rudiments or Elements of a Science, not so much for themselves, as for a further End: And as such Rudiments or Elements are laid aside, when once the Science it self is attained: so the Judicial and Ceremonial Laws were laid aside, as soon as the End for which they were given was attained. But the Moral Law, quite of another Nature, is the very Transcript or Copy of the Eternal Law of Reason residing in God's own Breast, and can no more be abrogated, than Vertue and Righteousness can be abrogated, it being the same thing with them. And therefore though God did require at the present, that All his Laws and Commandments, of what Kind soever, should be kept and observ'd: yet it was the Moral Law for which he was chiefly concerned, the Law of Eternal and Immutable Goodness, not temporarily impos'd upon Men, but interwoven into their very Nature at their Creation, and which, though a long Night of Sin may obscure and dim the Characters of, nothing can utterly obliterate. 'Tis true

this Law was afterwards written on Tables of Stone, but that was but for the same Reason, that we write them now adays on our Church-Walls, to put men in remembrance of them, and to send them to consult the Tables of their Hearts, where they were before engraved. But to proceed :

God's Laws, as my Text declares, go hand in hand with his Benefits ; his Favours and Commandments are never divided, but where he confers his Bounty, he always exacts Obedience. Men are willing to think (as *Israel* did) that all the Good they receive from God, is merely for their Accommodation, and that he has no regard to his own Glory and Service in bestowing them: that the Sun was made only to give them Light, to distinguish their Seasons, and to ripen their Fruit , Corn, and Wine, and other Products of the Earth ; to furnish their Tables, and relieve their Necessities, &c. Whereas these were given not only as Blessings, but as Documents and Instructions ; not so much to indulge the Outward, as to edifie the Inward Man ; to bring the Partakers of them to the Knowledge, Fear, and Love of the Deity : and if we would reflect on the End of God's Benefits, as well as barely on his Benefits, that which the Vine boasts of it self in the Parable, would be found true of all other good Creatures, *viz. that they would cheer both God and Man at the same time, i. e.* refresh and comfort indigent Man, and occasion Sacrifices of Thanksgiving and Obedience to the Almighty. 'Tis a Maxime even in the Gifts of Men conferr'd on one another, and grounded on good reason, *Omne beneficium est propter officium*, every Good-turn is for the sake of some Good-turn ; and Gifts otherwise bestowed, are justly lookt upon as proceeding only from Weakness ; as the Effects of Prodigality, or
some

some impotent Passion. And if any say, Benefits given on Design are by the Generous held base and fordid; that is only true, when the Design is Sinister and Unworthy, not when 'tis Noble and Religious, to promote Vertue, Friendship, &c.

Again, whereas my Text teaches us, that God makes use not only of his Laws, but of his Benefits to bring us to a Holy Life; not only employ his Authority, but woos and hires us to Righteousness: This shews that he is more than ordinarily concern'd in our Obedience, and that our yielding or denying it to him is not so Indifferent a thing as we make it. And if any ask, Why is the Almighty so concerned in the Actions and Behaviours of Men? Do their Vertue and Righteousness any way profit him? I answer, Not at all: the Righteousness of Faith contributes no more to his Happiness now under the Gospel, than Legal Righteousness did under the Law; his Essential Glory is no more augmented by our Spiritual Oblations, than his Being was sustained by the Bloud of Bulls and Goats: God is self-sufficient and self-happy, his Creatures receive all they have from his Fullness, and can confer nothing to him. That he is pleas'd to use so many Artifices and Endeavours to make Men Righteous, is for their sakes, not his own; 'tis his Goodness, not his Interest moves him to it; his Earnestness that we should live Holy Lives, is nothing else but his Earnestness that we should be saved. A petulant Inconsideration may wonder, why God was pleas'd to create Rebellious Man; but why he should desire to preserve him, when he had created him after his Own Image, there is no temptation to wonder at, any more than to wonder that God should be Good; or, to use the Psalmist's expression, that the Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness. We

shall shew our selves wiser to adore the Wisdom of God, and to submit to his Will, than to cavil at his proceedings, especially if we consider the Danger there is in Disobeying him : for though he solicites and courts us to a Holy Life, his Judgments always attend and stand by his Favours, and are ready to right any Wrong or Contempt that is cast upon them.

But now this being the End of all God's Mercies, *That he may be Glorified in the Obedience of his Creatures*, how did *Israel* comply with this his Design ? Why, truly, if we did not read it in his own Word, their Wickedness and Ingratitude, after so many and miraculous Benefits, would be incredible. There was no Sin or Abomination of the Heathen, Idolatry only excepted, that they were not guilty of. And why did I say, Idolatry only excepted ? when they added Apostasie to their other Provocations, and multiplied Idols equal to the Gentiles : so that it may be said, God cast out the *Canaanites* for those that proved worse *Canaanites* ; and that the *Jebusites* were better than the *Israelites*. And they went on despising God's Mercies, and frustrating the Designs of his Bounty, till at last they forfeited all his Mercies and his Bounties, and became of the most happy and glorious People, the most Miserable and Despicable, even the Astonishment of all Nations. Neither need we to travel into the once Holy, but now Unholy Land to understand their Condition : for God has made their Punishment as far known, as they made their Sins and Provocations ; and has sent them home to the very Doors of all the Nations of the Earth, to preach by their Example the Penalty of Ingratitude and Disobedience.

I have done with the Words, and that we may not amuse our selves with insignificant Invectives, or un-
concerning

concerning Relations, in contemplation of God's Mercies in common to us with other Christians, and his particular, Signal, and distinguishing Favour to us this Day, not only above other Nations, but even above our own Predecessors, let us ask our selves these two Questions :

1. Whether the Mercies of God have not been Greater to us, than to *Israel*, or to any other People? And

2. Whether our Ingratitude to him has not been also Greater than any others?

1. That his Mercies to us have been Greater than to *Israel* or any other, will need no long or laborious Proof: if the Mercies of the Gospel are Greater than those of the Law, the Substance of things more Excellent than their Shadows; if God's casting out the *Israelites* themselves for our sakes, as he cast out the seven Nations for theirs, and making the *Jews* but as *Gibeonites* to *Christians*, as Drawers of Water, and Hewers of Wood, be a higher Favour: If again his Benefits to us exceed even those of our Fellow-Christians, if our Religion be purer, our Government happier, our People freer than theirs: If, lastly, the Blessings conferred on us of this Generation transcend even those of our Ancestors; the Deliverance of the Kingdom in no Age being able to parallel the wonderful Restoration of it in this.

2. And secondly, I fear 'twill be as easily made to appear, our Sins have been also Greater than any besides. For if *Israel* and Others were Ungrateful, we have been even Despightful to our Gracious God and Benefactor; sinn'd, as 'twere, out of a Pique to the Divine Goodness, more than out of Infirmary; whereas they were Idolaters, we have been Atheists; whereas they only forgot their God, we have derided
ours;

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ours; and not only denied him by our Wicked Lives, but denied him in Words to have any Being. Again, if *Israel* and others have defiled themselves with the Sins of the Flesh, our Nation is polluted from one End to the Other with Riot and Debauchery: we being not contented to commit the Shamefullest of all Sins, but we must leave Trophies of them; affix to whole Streets of our Cities the Names of those *Nefanda*, those infamous Crimes, which, as the Apostle says, ought not so much as to be mentioned among Christians. If others have Murmured after their Eminent Benefits and Deliverances, we have mutinied and been Seditious after ours; turned our Thanksgivings and Glorifications of God into Libels against the Government; our Vows of Loyalty and Obedience to the King, into Conspiracies and Treasons against his Life.

And what do we promise our selves after these things? That though God spared not his own People, but took the Forfeiture of the Lands of the *Israelites*, as well as of the *Canaanites*, for the greatness of their Transgressions, yet that he will spare us as more Precious to him? Let us not deceive our selves, the Greater has been God's Bounty to an Ungrateful People, the Greater will be the Displeasure he shews to them. Saint Paul, *Rom. 11.* brings in God displanting one Nation for their Iniquity, and planting in another; cutting off, and grafting-in; after the manner of a Husbandman or Gardener, who places and displaces his Trees, according to their fruitfulness or unfruitfulness; and he expressly tells us, That we that are but Wild Branches grafted into the Olive-tree, have no reason to boast our selves against the Natural Branches and to be high-minded, but to fear: For if God, says he, spared not the Natural Branches,
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take heed lest he spare not you. 'Tis not so much the Contingency that is in the Nature of the things of this World, as the Sins of Men that make them unstable; the Fortunes of Kingdoms are not tost like the Waves of the Sea, lift up one while to the Clouds, and then carried down again to the Center by the force of Winds; but according to their Righteousness or Unrighteousness God pulls down one, and sets up another. Neither are they governed by the Power of Stars: The Jews have an excellent Saying, *Non est Planeta Israeli*, *Israel* has no Planet, *i. e.* though God gave up the Heathen oft-times to be governed, like the Plants of the Earth, by the Influences of Stars, because they trusted in such Vain things: yet he orders and disposes the Affairs of his faithful People immediately himself. And 'tis a mere Vulgar Conceit, that Comets cause Wars and Changes of States; Divine Philosophy tells us, Mens Sins occasion God to send Comets, and to fill the Sky with Prophetick Prodigies. We affect to look as far beyond our selves as we can for the Causes of our Evils, but they are to be found nearer at Home, and arise out of our own Breasts; the Heavens are not the Authors of our Misfortunes, *i. e.* the Conjunctions or Revolutions of the Celestial Bodies, but our own Wicked Lives; and the surest Prognosticks are to be made from the Innocence or Guilt of a Nation, and not from the Face of the Sky. Let no Man think I cast a Cloud upon the Glory of this Day, Illustrious in the Birth, Illustrious in the Restoration of our most Gracious King; that instead of exciting, I affect to damp the Publick Joy by Ill Bodings; unless he also supposes, that the Blessings of a Nation cannot be rightly commemorated and celebrated without Noise and Inconsideration, Tumult and Riot,

Riot, Excess and Debauchery, setting-light by Sin, and forgetfulness of Religion. A sad and severe Reflection on our Unthankfulness to God for the Singular Mercies of this Day, with a serious Resolution of our better Acknowledging them by a future Holy Life, will add more Lustre and true Joy to it, than the Bravery and Feasts, the Bells and Bonfires, and all the other Poms that solemnize it. For let us consider, That every Wise Agent works to some End or other, and that not only the Words we have heard this Day explain'd, but the whole Tenour of Scripture concurs in this, That the End and Purpose of God's bestowing Benefits on a Nation, is to make them Righteous and Holy; and that the only Expedient on our part to secure a Continuation of them, is to have a strict regard to our Duty; that Obedience is the best Preserver of our Happiness; and the Means always to keep God's Favour, is always to keep his Laws.

The

The Thirteenth Sermon.

MARK viii. 2, 3.

*I have Compassion on the Multitude:
because they have now been with me
three days, and have nothing to eat.
And if I send them away fasting to
their own houses, they will faint by
the way: for divers of them came
from far.*

THESE Words were the Introduction to that Illustrious Miracle, by which our Lord fed four thousand Souls with seven Loaves, and a few small Fishes; made the bare and spare Allowance of seven Persons (as some suppose) sufficient to satisfy the Hunger of so great a Multitude. A Miracle that baffled one of the clearest and most irrefragable Principles in Natural Reason, namely, *That the Part is less than the Whole*; making it appear, that when the

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Lord of Nature will have it so, a Part shall as many times exceed the Whole, as he pleases : as the Bread and Fishes here encreased, by being eaten and consumed ; multiplied, by being do'd and distributed about ; and the Fragments which remained, exceeded seven times seven fold the Provision, which at first was set before them that eat.

Our Lord wrought this Miracle, as himself declares, *to relieve the Hunger of the Multitude* : but his principal Design here, as in all his other Miracles, was to create Faith in such as received Benefit by them ; to teach those whom he healed, that he *was the great Physician of the Soul* ; and whom he fed, that *he was the true Bread that came down from Heaven*. And if We (at this great Distance of time, by our Meditations and Reflections on this Miracle) shall make it also nourish our Souls, refresh our Faith, relieve and sustain our fainting Spirits, ready to sink under the continual Opposition of Sin, and the length of Duties, we shall add yet to the Glory of it, and, in a Spiritual Sense, make these Words spoken to us : *I have Compassion on the Multitude : because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat, &c.*

This Portion of Scripture is part of a larger Narrative, and I shall take that Way in handling it, which those do, who make Remarks and Observations upon Notable Occurrents and Events in History, reflect and descant on the Principal Passages in it, as I conceive they may be most edifying and useful. And in order to this I shall observe in the Words three things : 1. Our Lord's tender and compassionate Spirit, *I have Compassion*. 2. The Object of his Compassion, the Persons to whom he shew'd it, *the Multitude, I have compassion on the Multitude*. 3. The Motives of his Compassion, which are express'd to be
two,

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two, Their present Distress, they were Hungry, and had nothing to eat. And their future feared Danger, in case they were so dismiss'd, they will faint by the way. I begin first with Christ's tender and compassionate Spirit.

I have Compassion.

The Great Preacher, our Blessed Lord, had ended his Sermon to the People, and as the antient custom of the Church was, at the End of the first Service, to dismiss the *Pœnitentes* and *Catechumeni*, all such as were not qualify'd to receive the Sacrament, with these Words, *Ite, missa est*, Depart and void the Church: So the Disciples might very fairly here have pronounc'd an *Ite, missa est*, to the Multitude, *Ye may be gone, there is nothing more at this time to be expected, the Prophet has no further words of Instruction to impart to you.* For, as for their want of Bread, whether it proceeded from Negligence or Necessity, it was not chargeable on the Preacher; he that ministr'd Spiritual things, was not also to minister Temporal, but in these to be ministr'd to. But our Lord had no purpose to shift off a Work of Mercy, when 'twas seasonable and in his power, though he might never so fairly have done it: he cast not therefore in his thoughts, how he might plausibly Excuse his not relieving the peoples Hunger, but which way he might do it best for the Glory of God, and their Comfort and Edification. There were a Sort of Preachers in this Kingdom in the days of its late Troubles, who when they had usurp'd the whole Revenues of the Church, grudg'd to allow the least part of them to the Just Owners: but thought they approved themselves faithful Pastors, absolved all the Du-

ties of Good Men, if they *shew'd but Strong Sides, and able Lungs, stood three Hours*, as they call'd it, *in the Pulpit*, but after that concerned not themselves, though their poor Brethren stood as many Days without Meat. The continual Burden of their Sermon was, *The Word of God, the Word of God!* Frighting the People with a Fear of a Famine of that of which there was no fear, *viz.* of their seditious Doctrines, and shutting their Eyes to all other Famine, the Want of those things which should cherish the Life of Man. But our Lord, who was *Pastor bonus*, as well as *Doctor bonus*, a good Shepherd, as well as a good Teacher, thought *Tender Bowels* were requisite, as well as *Tough Sides*; and fed his Sheep Corporally, as well as Spiritually, when necessity required: he considered that the devoutest Souls stood in need of Meat, and that as *Man did not live by Bread only*, so neither did he live by the Word of God only; but that Food was necessary, as well as Precepts; Relief to the Hungry, as well as Instruction to the Ignorant. In the Church of *Rome* they have an Order of *Fryars-Preachers*, men of learning and ability to confute Hereticks: and another Order, which were called *Fratres ignorantes*, the Unlearned Fryars, whose business 'tis to tend Hospitals, and to do other Offices of Charity: And though we approve not the bringing of Ignorant Orders into the Church and Clergy, yet this double Care of theirs, in providing for the Bodies, as well as the Souls of men, is highly commendable, and may be justified by the Practice of the Church in its Earliest and holiest days: as we read *Acts 6.* that there were not only Apostles to preach, but also Deacons to serve Tables. The People had been our Lords Auditors now three days fasting in a desert place, and his compassionate Heart would not
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dismiss them hungry, lest the Dissolution of the Assembly, should be the Dissolution of the Souls and Bodies of many of them ; he resolv'd therefore to supply by a Miracle, what was wanting in the Desert ; to furnish from the Granaries of Heaven, what the Villages did not afford.

The Word in the Original rendred by our Translators [*Compassion*] implies more than a bare *Pity*, viz. that our Lord felt a *Strong Impulse*, or *vehement Percussion in his Bowels*, for the Suffering of the people. He wanted not meat himself, but he was nevertheless sensible of the hunger of others ; his own Stomach grip'd him not, yet he was pain'd, because the Multitude lack'd Sustenance. And this is the true nature of Compassion and Goodness, it lyes under no Evil it self, but yet 'tis afflicted for what another suffers ; it is safe in its own particular, and yet agast at the Dangers which it hears of. *Who is weak*, says St Paul, *and I am not weak ? who is offended, and I burn not ?* That which Flattery does in Pretence and Dissimulation, Compassion does in truth and Reality. The *Satyrist* makes the Sycophant, if his Patron says, 'Tis cold, call presently for his Furr-Gown, though in the midst of Summer ; and again, if he says, 'Tis hot, strip himself of it in the Extremity of Winter. Compassion feels the heats and colds, the pains and griefs, the wants and nakedness of those that are under such Afflictions, not apishly imitating, but truly suffering their Distresses. And our Saviour shewed that this Passion was predominant in him, not only at the present, but on many other Occasions ; he sigh'd for the Sick, shed tears for the Dead, pray'd for his Persecutors upon the Cross, &c. And now I have said so much of our Lord's Compassion, it were to reproach my Auditory, and not to exhort them, to use

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use any Arguments to shew, we ought to sympathize with him in the like Tenderneſs; that when he was all Pity, and melted at every Calamity, it will ill become us to shew our selves Rock and Steel at the Miseries of our Brethren. I proceed to the Object of *Christ's* Compassion, *the Multitude*.

I have Compassion on the Multitude.

Our Lord in journeying from *Decapolis* and the Regions thereabout, had gathered to himself by the power of his Preaching, and the sight of his Miracles, a great Number of promiscuous People, styl'd in the Original *ὄχλος*, a Rabble of the Meaner Sort, such as the Priests and Pharisees pointed at *John 7.* when they said, *Have any of the Rulers believed on him, but only this People, who know not the Law, and are accursed?* For the over-weaning Pharisees reckoned the Poor among Publicans and Sinners, Reprobates and Harlots; esteemed those who had no Name in the State, who were capable of bearing no Honour or Office, to be also incapable of receiving any Special Mark of God's Favour: according to the Proverbial Speech so common among them, *Spiritus non requiescit nisi super divitem*, the Spirit is sent only to Eminent Persons, and refuses to rest on the Mean and Abject. And yet it was the Distress of these undervalued, despised People, the Hunger of this condemned reprobated Rabble (in their Rulers account not worthy to be fed, if with trouble, scarce to be starved, and who if they did dye through Want, the World would find no Want of them.) that so nearly affected our Lord, and so sensibly toucht his very Vitals. A Commiseration fit to be transcribed by those that are in Power and Great Place, who shew

shew too much of that Anti-Christian Turkish Principle, That the Lives of the Vulgar are of no Moment, fit only to be sacrificed to the Lusts and Pleasures of the Rich in times of peace, and in War to fill up Ditches, and blunt the Enemies Sword: thus not being content to be at Ease only, and out of the Peoples Danger, unless they may be also without all Sense of their Misery. 'Tis said, as I remember, of *Pompey the Great, mavult Rempublicam turbare, quàm Comam*, he would rather the Commonwealth should be disordered than his Hair: and too many there are of this nice Temper, to be deeplier concerned for every trifling Curiosity about their own Persons, than for the Publick Good or Evil of their Country; and if their Lot be so happy, as to exempt them from bearing a part in a General Calamity, they easily exempt themselves from feeling any Trouble for it. But our Lord shew'd himself of a Publick Spirit; for when he was above the Evils and Calamities of Mankind, he espoused their Nature to no other End, but that he might espouse their Miseries; and after he had laid aside his Glory, he laid down also his Life for the Salvation of his Creatures; he disdained not to converse with the Meanest of the People, to instruct their Ignorance, to heal their Infirmities, to relieve their Hunger. And this to teach us, That Christians ought to shew Regard, where others shew Scorn; there to place their Pity and Compassion, where the Custom of the World is to place its Contempt; to teach by his Own Example, what he afterwards taught his Apostle *S^t Peter* by the Sheet of all Sorts of Creatures let down from Heaven, To hold none Refuse or Common, no, not to esteem the People themselves Vulgar. I pass to the Motives of our Lord's Compassion, which I said were two.

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The present Want of the Multitude, *They have nothing to eat.* And their fear'd future Danger, in case they were so dismiss'd, *They will faint by the Way.*

1. Their present Want, *They have nothing to eat.*

Our Lord not only exercis'd his Compassion towards the Meanest of Men, but even in the Meanest things which concerned such men, the catering or providing Food for them. His Disciples after him thought it a Disparagement to their higher Calling of Preaching to stoop to such Low Employments. *It is not reason,* say they, *that we should leave the Word of God, to serve Tables :* but He despis'd not to serve Tables too. Meat is not the Reward or Aim of a Follower of *Christ*, but Grace and the Holy Ghost, Heaven and Eternal Life : Food, raiment, houses, land, and the rest of things Temporal, are indeed but *Impedimenta Religionis*, the Baggage or Luggage of our Christian Warfare, cumbersome to a Believer, as well as useful ; yet because they are useful in our present Condition, *Christ* indulges them to us, and is troubled if we want a Sufficiency of them ; and however there is but *Unum Necessarium*, One Great Requisite, Faith ; yet the other things of this Life, which are necessary, in their kind, to that One Necessary, he wills and commands should be given to his Servants ; and if they be, he imputes it to the Givers of them for Righteousness ; and if they be not, to the With-holders of them for Unrighteousness.

The second Motive of *Christ's* Compassion was, The fear'd future Danger of the People, *lest they might faint by the way.* He shew'd himself not only troubled at present and incumbent Distresses, but solicitous for those that were future and possible, for all

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all Emergences of Evils which might happen. Thus he wept for the Destruction of *Jerusalem* forty Years before it was destroyed : bewail'd the Desolation of *Capernaum*, while it yet flourisht; and was *exalted to heaven*. Compassion, or Fellow-feeling, of anothers Misery, expresses not the Commiseration that was in *Christ*; his was an *Ante-passion*, or Fore-feeling; he felt not only what his Servants felt, but what they felt not, but might possibly feel: *If I send them away fasting*, says he, *they will faint by the way*: We are sensible of one anothers Calamities, when they fall out, *Christ* even when they are contingent. He well deserves the Title of a *Merciful High-Priest*, who shew'd himself not only touch'd with the Evils that oppress men, but with those also that threaten them.

These were the two Motives of our Lord's Compassion, The present Distress, And the future Danger of the People. But the Distresses and Dangers of all Sorts of Men do not equally affect him, but only those of the Worthy. It was the Singular Faith and Devotion of the Multitude which brought them into the Inconvenience they were in, and our Lord's words do not only express a Disposition or Inclination to relieve them, but an Indignation that they should suffer; *ἀγαθὸν πράξαι, καὶ κακὸν συμβῆναι*, that men should do Well, and yet suffer Evil, his Gracious Nature could not endure. The Circumstances of the Peoples Worthiness and Goodness, which may be collected from the Words of my Text, are these four :

I. The *End* for which they follow'd *Christ*, It was purely for Instruction and Conviction : they had no other Design, no other Interest in attending him,

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but to hear his Words, and to see his Works ; and such deserved not to be starved away. *The Lions do lack and suffer hunger*, says the Psalmist, *but they which seek the Lord, shall want no manner of thing that is good.* Those that sit assiduously at *Christ's* feet, deserve to be fed by his hand ; who neglect all for him, to be cared for by him ; and till he had here relieved the Multitude, he himself suffered ; for they appeared to him not only to be his Disciples, but his Martyrs.

The second Circumstance of their Worthiness was, *The Pains they took in following Christ*, *Divers of them*, says he, *came from far.* To follow *Christ* only from Street to Street, and Synagogue to Synagogue within the City, merited Regard : but to attend him from Town to Town, from City to Country, from Mountain to Desert, call'd for a greater measure of our Affection. To receive the Gospel, when 'tis brought Home to us, is commendable ; but to go on Pilgrimage to hear Wisdom, like the Queen of *Sheba*, deserves, as she did, to find more Satisfaction than was expected : those that submit to hear the Word of God, shall find Comfort and Refreshment to their Souls, but they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, *inebriabuntur ubertate domus tue*, they shall be even gorged and sated with the Plenty of his House. The Church of *Rome*, among other vain and false Glories, reckons that of Pilgrimages : but who looks nearly into the Mystery of them, will find, that when they are undertaken by Great Men, 'tis with a Perswasion, that the most heinous Offences may be expiated by Bodily Pains and profuse Offerings, without Reformation of Life : and when by those of the Meaner Sort, 'tis but, under a
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Colour of Religion, a plain running-away from their Wives and Children, or the Burden of their Calling; and as they went out Idle and Profligate Persons, they return commonly Thieves and Murderers.

The third Circumstance of their Worthiness was, *The Generosity and Spiritual-Mindedness they shew'd*: Though they had continued with our Lord three days, and had made no Provision for the Body, yet they felt no Hunger, or despised it; they were so transported with his Conversation, that what *Christ* said of his own doing the Will of his Father, *That it was Meat and Drink to him*, appear'd true in the Multitudes hearing his Gracious Words, *That it was Meat and Drink to them*: they practis'd this Precept before it was taught them, *Anima est plusquam esca*, the Concerns of the Soul are to take place before those of the Body. 'Twas said of the ancient common People of Rome, — *duastantum res anxias optat, Panem & Circenses* — that they passionately set their heart but upon two things, Bread and Plays, their Belly and their Pastime. But the People here of a Nobler Strain, despised their belly, pleasure, profit, ease, Life it self, for Religion and Instruction sake: And therefore though our Lord many other times sent away the People Empty, or slipt away himself from their importunity, he treated and feasted these, and dismiss'd them with Respect and Complement.

The fourth Circumstance of their Worthiness was their *Constancy and Perseverance*, they forsook not Christ in three days. Those that are not discouraged at the first Onset on Religion, yet many times length and hardness of Duties, severe Discipline, Danger and Persecutions, will make them stagger and re-

coil. The Seed that fell upon Stony Ground, sprung up faster for a season, than that which fell on the Good Ground: but when the Sun arose and smote it, it presently withered, wanting root. The Children of *Israel* went cheerfully and lustily with *Moses* out of *Egypt*, but when their Food grew scarce, and they saw the Host of *Pharaoh* pursue them, they boggled in their Enterprize, and in their hearts returned again into *Egypt*, preferring Bondage with Safety and Plenty, before Freedom with Hardship and Danger. But their Posterity voluntarily follow'd *Christ* three days without Sustenance, and never lookt back to their houses, or yet to their beloved City. *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem!* says the Psalmist, *let my right Hand forget its Cunning.* But these *Israelites*, when they heard Tidings of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, the *Jerusalem* above, they cast behind them all thoughts of *Jerusalem* below, it appeared to them no better than a second *Babylon*, or house of Bondage. As our Lord therefore made others of the People his Scholars, he made these of his Family; as he taught them, he fed these; revealed not only the Word, but the Power and Glory of God to them. To conclude:

I shall raise from all that I have said but this One acceptable and comfortable Doctrine, *Whosoever follows Christ faithfully, affectionately, and constantly in these days, will find him as Compassionate in their Wants and Distresses, as the Multitude here did.* For he has the same Bowels and Tenderneſs, now at the Right Hand of God, which he had when he conversed with men on Earth: he is ascended Intire into the Heavens, he did not carry up his Body thither, and leave his Affections in the Grave. If we there-
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fore seek the Kingdom of Heaven, in the first place, and its Righteousness, we may rest assured of our Lord's Promise, That all the Necessaries of this Life shall be added to us ; that if we perform the Principal, he will take care to make good the Accessory. What is said of the Productions of Nature, *That she brings forth nothing but what she provides for*, is much more true of the Productions or Children of Grace. For when the Earth with-holds its Fatness, and the Clouds their Dew, when the Creatures that should nourish Men starve themselves for want of Nourishment, when the Breasts of Nature seem wholly dried up, *venit Cælum in partes*, Heaven it self will come in to succour, and take Part with the Faithful : and if Sterility abounds, *Grace* (on this occasion also) *will much more abound* ; if the Soil afford no Corn, Bread shall be rained from the Sky ; if the Springs fail, the *Stony Rock shall send forth Water*, and *Rivers shall run in dry places* ; the Ravens shall feed the Righteous, or their little Stock shall encrease as fast as 'tis spent ; the Courses of Nature shall be inverted, rather than Christ's Truth fail ; *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one Tittle of his Word shall fall to the ground*. And if any say, How comes it then to pass, that the Servants of God do suffer Want ? Nay, that commonly they are more destitute and persecuted than other Men ? I answer to this, as our Lord did to his Disciples urging him on a time to eat, *I have Meat to eat*, says he, *which you know not of* : So the Faithful have Meat to eat, which the World knows not of ; they have Peace, Plenty, and Prosperity, though not seen by every Eye. They have the Grace of God, which is as a hidden Manna in their Hearts, and

as a Well of Living Water, which suffers them neither to hunger nor thirst. And is it not much more Eligible and Glorious to fast with *Moses* and *Elias* forty days, than to feast even at the Table of Princes? To be in the State of Angels, who need neither Food nor Raiment, than to be clothed and served with all the Sumptuousness and Magnificence of *Solomon*? The Righteous have Content in Poverty, which is more than Riches; Joy in Bonds, which is better than Freedom; Satiety in a little, which is not always found in Abundance. And what is this, but to receive Bread from Heaven, when the Earth affords none? Water from the Rock, when the Springs are dried up? To be fed even by a more Wonderful Way, than by the Ministry of Ravens? Neither is the Favour of God this Way shew'd to the Followers of Christ, less than that which he shew'd to his Own Servants of old, but much greater: for it speaks yet a higher Grace to be content to perish under Hunger, Poverty, and Bonds, than to be snatch'd out of these Evils after a Miraculous Manner. Saint *Peter* rejoiced more, when he was scourged for bearing Testimony to *Christ*, than when he was deliver'd by an Angel from the Death design'd him by *Herod*. And Saint *Paul* gloried more in his *Persecutions* and *Sufferings*, than he did even in his *Charismata*, his Miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost. And thus our Gracious Lord relieves the Necessities of his Servants from the Store-houses of the World, or from the Riches of his Grace; rescues them out of their Afflictions, or makes them delight in them; supplies their Wants, or sets them above the Wants
of

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of other Men ; takes away their Wants, or takes them up to that Place, where no Wants are, and where all Tears shall be wip'd from their Eyes. To which blessed Place, God of his infinite Mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, bring us all. And

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, Worship, and Thanksgiving, this Day forth and for evermore. Amen.

The

The Fourteenth Sermon.

LUKE xvi. 9.

— *Make to your selves Friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*

THESE Words may be call'd a Lecture of holy Usury, they teaching us the highest Advantages that are to be made of Riches; beyond what is to be learned from the Books of Eastern Merchants, or the Trade to both the *Indies*; from the Mysterious Rules of the antient Publicans, or our modern Bankers. 1. They teach men, by a Divine Alchymy, how to convert Earthly Treasure into Heavenly; to make Money (the ordinary Salary and hire of Sin) to be the Price of Salvation, and the Purchase of the Holy Ghost, without the Danger of *Simony*. 2. Men are instructed by them how to cure

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the Vanity and Instability of Riches, call'd for their inconstant and short Abode, *mendacium, phantasmata, prestigia, scenica persona*, &c. a Lye, a Dream, a Delusion, the quick shifting of a Scene or Vizor in the Theatre; and notwithstanding that 'tis said, We can carry nothing out of this World with us, we are shew'd which way to confer them to Heaven, and to erect Banks in those Eternal Mansions. 3. Whereas Folly is ordinarily imputed to Rich men, *insanus & dives, stultus & dives*, the Mad man and the Rich, the Fool and the Rich, being seldom in Scripture out of conjunction, it being rarely seen that a Good Understanding goes along with a Great Estate; that the same Person should be born both to much Wealth, and to much Wit; my Text informs men how to reconcile these together, how the Rich having the advantage of Wealth, may have also the advantage of Wisdom; how with their Transitory things they may purchase things Eternal: nay, and which is yet a higher Strain of Wisdom, how (being but Stewards of the Riches they possess) they may make (after the example of one of the craftiest Dealers in this World, and best practis'd in the Double-ways of Cozenage) the gainful Purchase of Heaven at anothers Cost: and do this Innocently, as he did it Fraudulently. Lastly, Men are taught how to remove the Difficulty, and almost Impossibility, of a Rich man's entering into the Kingdom of Heaven; how to make its Narrow Passage (*which is as the Eye of a Needle to a Camel*) as wide as the Gate of a City, or the Royal Way leading to it. A Lecture which, undoubtedly, must be very acceptable to Great and Rich men, instructing them how to possess the Good Things of this World, without forfeiting those of the next; how to join Celestial Joys to Earthly Felicity;

licity; immortal Glory to Secular Prosperity; Again, which can be no less grateful to the Penurious and Covetous, who love to enjoy their Wealth, after they have parted with it; to have it their Friend, when they can hold it no longer their Servant; who desire to dwell for ever, if it were possible, with their beloved Gold; to cohabit with it in the next Life, as they brooded over it in this; my Text comports and complies with all these Desires. *Make to your selves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into Everlasting Habitations.*

The Words offer these two things in general to our Consideration,

I. The Necessity of our Failing in these Habitations, — *When ye fail* —

II. The Policy taught us, how to procure Admission into Everlasting Habitations, when we fail in these: and that is, *By making Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness.*

And without troubling you with any further Division at present, I begin with the first of these,

The Necessity of our failing in these Habitations.

These Words [*when ye fail*] are by some understood two ways, by our failing in Duty, and our failing in our Being, or Dying: As the Steward in the Parable fail'd two Ways: 1. In his Honesty, as at ver. 1. he had wasted his Master's Goods. And 2^{dly}, In his Office, as at ver. 2. where his Master says to him, Thou may'st be no longer Steward. And after the like manner all Men fail, more or less, in their Fidelity and Justice: But all equally and necessarily in their Mortal Being. But whether we fail in the one of

these Ways, or the other, whether we come short in our Duty, or are cut short in our Lives; in both these Failings the Unrighteous Mammon will stand us in stead. 1. If we fail in our Justice, *Eleemosynæ sunt instar Justitiæ*, Alms are a kind of Justice; and not only to Forgive, but also to Give, will cover a multitude of Sins: So that if we fail, *viz.* in our Integrity, we may again be restored by our Charity; and when we have wasted and consumed our Graces, we may recruite them by exhausting our Purfes, and in this Shipwrack also, casting our Goods overboard, may be a Means of our Preservation.

But though this Sense of the Words has nothing in it contrary to sound Doctrine, yet it cannot be that which our Lord points at in them: For the Failing here spoken of is supposed to be Inevitable, Necessary, and Universal, when ye fail; indefinitely, when ye All fail: neither can the Words be supposed to allude to the Common Pardonable Failing or Miscarriage of an honest Servant, but to the Purloining and Cheating of a Thief, which the Steward was, and for that cause was turned out of his Office. If therefore we say the Failing here is meant of our Duty, it must be of our General Total Duty, which is Apostasie, or else it holds no proportion to the Steward's failing in the Parable: and if we do, it holds no proportion with the Truth: for we must affirm, our Lord supposes it Necessary and Inevitable for all Men Universally to be Apostates.

We must take the Words therefore in the other Sense, *For Failing in our Being*, or Mortal Bodies: which are often resembled in Scripture to *Houses* and *Tabernacles*, but I shall instance only in 2 Cor. 5. 1. *For we know, if the Earthly Houses of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God, a House not made*

made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens. There is in the Words the Figure *Euphemismus*, which terms things by more gentle and Favourable Names, than properly belong to them. Death sounds harsh to those 'tis denounced; to alleviate therefore the ungratefulness of it, 'tis render'd *Failing*: But the plain Importance of these Words [*when ye fail*] is no other than this, *When ye Die*.

But now, though this be the true Meaning of the Words, it may seem to be a Theme less necessary to be insisted on, than any other, *To tell men they must Die*: Not that the Admonition is not weighty and of the highest Concern, but because it is so well known by all, and none needs this Information, *Lingunda domus, & tellus, & pavens uxor*— that our Houses, Lands, and tender Relations must be left by us; that nothing which is either dear to us, or we dear unto, can exempt us from the Law of Death, is News to no man; all men, of what Sort and Condition soever, can assume Saint Paul's *scio, We Know that this Earthly Tabernacle shall be dissolved*. The Ignorant see it daily demonstrated in the Mortality of other men, and the Infirmities they find in themselves; the Learned yet further by Philosophy and Reason, which tell them, That their Bodies being made up of a Mass of contrary Humours continually jarring and fighting with one another, the Victory on either side must certainly be the Destruction of the Subject in which they are contained. Divinity adds to these a third Demonstration, teaching men that there is a Law of Death in their Members, not that which I but now spoke of, a Natural Law of Mortality, but a Spiritual Law of Sin, and consequently of Death: which Law had its Sanction from God's own Mouth, *Gen. 2. In the hour thou*
callest,

eateth, thou shalt dye. This present World is but a Nursery or Seminary to another, in which nothing is to be seen more common, than the transplanting of Men from this to that : Or it may be likened to a Tree, that has at the same time upon it, some Fruit decaying, some ripe, and some blooming, the one continually succeeding and thrusting off the other, till the Tree it self at last fails, as not being design'd to stand for ever.

All Men, I say, are of sufficient Learning to preach such Lectures as these, and stand not in need to have their Understanding instructed, or their Reason convinc'd in this Particular. But yet, I know not how, though Demonstration and Experience assure this Truth on the one side, there is something in Life it self on the other, something in Prosperity, Youth, Greatness, the Businesses of this World, and the like, which strangely contradict it ; and though we believe nothing more certainly, than *that All Men must Dye*, we believe nothing more hardly, than *that we our Selves must Dye*. Those that burn in a Fever feel no Cold ; that are encompass'd with much Light, discern no Darkness ; no more can those that are incircled with the Splendour of a high Fortune, see through it the gloomy Shades of the Grave ; nor those that are within the warm embraces of Youth and Health apprehend the Cold remote Hand of Death. *Paracelsus* was perswaded, that there was a Certain Spirit of Salt, that gave Vegetation to all things in the World, which if he could have found out, he would have preserved himself and others Immortal. All men have generally a Tincture of this foolish *Chymical*, or rather Chimerical, Salt in their Fancy ; which though it preserves them not from Dying, yet it gives them a Perswasion of long Living ;
and

and though it cannot defer the Fatal Hour one Moment, it can make them forget it, and put the Consideration of it far from them. Our Reflections upon our own Dying, are much like those of Raving Lovers upon the Loss of those they Immoderately affected, who at the very Instant that they embrace their Dead Bodies in their Arms, cry out, *They cannot, they must not, they shall not Dye.* What they are not able to support, they are not willing to acknowledge; the Sorrow which is too Great for their Hearts to bear, is too Great also for their Tongues to pronounce. And after the like manner, though we see and feel Death daily marching towards us, we being not able to brook its Approach, we endeavour to disbelieve it; and hope to avoid the Evil, by disowning it; to delude or delay our Destiny, by entertaining Fictions of a Long Life; and I may say, There is nothing that we at once so much Believe, and so much Disbelieve, as the Necessity of our Dying.

'Tis not therefore Superfluous to teach Men the so Known Lesson of Dying, to put them in mind of that, which is daily presented before their Eyes. And the Wisest in all Ages, as well Heathens as Christians, have used studied Arts to preserve a Memory of their Frail Condition: some have brought Urns, and Skulls, and Coffins into their Bed-Chambers and Closets, that where the Scene of their Business or Pleasure lay, there they might be admonish'd, that they must one day bid a Farewel to those things: Others have served up Skeletons at their Feasts, the whole Frame of a Dead man's Bones made with Art to turn to all the Guests, and with a horrid Aspect to survey the Table, and to insinuate that Death was always near, though forgotten in the Noise of Mirth and Wine; late President of many Feasts, though invisibly through

through the Reek of Jollity and Meat. Others upon the Days of their Coronation and Triumph have placed those among the Multitude, that might mingle Admonitions of their Mortality together with the general Applauses and Acclamations, that they might not forget, while they conquered or commanded many People, themselves were Subject to Death; and that their Heads, which were now crown'd with Gold or Laurel, must after a short time be laid in the Dust. All these confessing, that it was not enough that Men should believe they must Dye, when they Considered and Reasoned of it, but that they ought frequently to Consider and Reason of it.

And now after all is done, though these Courses may seem of great Power and Efficacy to take off the Strangeness and Terrour of Death: yet they have been found to fall short of the End they aimed at: For though men by these Artifices have become acquainted with the Name and Images of Death, they have still been miserably Strangers to Death it self; neither is it possible to strip the King of Terrours of his amazing Circumstances merely by remembering him, and making Pictures and Representations of him: but men must fit and prepare themselves to entertain him, they must lye under no Guilt of Sin, nor be too much in love with this Life, before they can Master this Apprehension: for 'tis no less than a Contradiction, that those that are fond of this Life, should welcome Death; that are inferior to every Lust and Temptation, should be Superior to the Greatest of Evils. We must make Death Harmless, before we can make him not to be Dreadful; take away his Sting and Curse by Repentance and a holy Life, before we can take away his Terrour; make him Beneficial and Advantageous, before we can reconcile

concile him to our thoughts, and render him Familiar to us. For to retain Sin, and yet to hope to free our Selves from the Punishment of Sin, would not be to set our selves to conquer the Unreasonable Fears of our Nature, but to conquer God, to wrest the Vengeance of Iniquity out of his hands, which the Pain and Fear of Death are. And if it be objected, that the antient Heathen, out of a Principle only of Magnanimity and an Emulous Bravery, despised Death; I answer, That they cannot so truly be said to have Despised Death, as to have been Ignorant of it; they promised themselves after their departure hence a Being of Fame and Renown, they knew nothing but Fables of the Punishments of another World: for 'tis not Courage, but Madness, to despise Torments that are Intolerable, and Eternal. If it be urged again, That many Professors of Christianity, who have heard the Doctrine of Damnation and another Life frequently preached, have yet after many heinous and unrepented Sins rush'd as boldly upon Death as the Heathen; I reply, Though they often heard the Doctrine of Damnation preach'd, they never believ'd it; but Infidelity wrought the same Effect in them, which Ignorance did in the other. No, we must disarm Death, as I said, of the Evil that accompanies him by a Righteous Life, before we can disarm him of his Terror; if we will not be dismay'd, when this Grim Landlord comes to turn us out of our Mortal Tenements, we must provide our Selves before-hand Everlasting Habitations. Which brings me to my Second General Part, the Policy which is taught us to procure Everlasting Habitations, when we fail in these; and that is, by making to our selves Friends

Of the Mammon of Unrighteousness.

We may observe in the Policy here prescribed us, three things: 1. The Instrument of it, *The Unrighteous Mammon*. 2. The Use of this Instrument, *We are to make Friends with it*. 3. The End of this Use, *That we may be received into Everlasting Habitations*.

I begin with the Instrument, the *Unrighteous Mammon*, in which there are two things to be explained, The Name and Substance of it, *Mammon*; And the Condition or Qualification of it, *The Unrighteous Mammon*.

1. The Name and Substance of it, *Mammon*.

The Word *Mammon*, by the consent of most Criticks, is originally *Syriack*, but with very little Variation of writing and pronunciation, as *Mamon* or *Mammon*, *Mamoná* or *Mammoná*, 'tis *Chaldee*, *Hebrew*, *Greek*, *Latine*, and as *S^t Hierome* and *S^t Augustine* affirm, also *Punick* or *Carthaginian*; not to say how far it has obtained in the Modern Tongues. A Word, it seems, very significant, that is adopted into so many Languages, and become Proverbial, and the Proper Name of a Deity: for *Mammon* imports the Same with *Plutus*, the God of Riches: who was an Anti-Deity of old set up by Covetousness, which, as the Apostle says, is Idolatry; and to whom every full Barn of the Miser, is, as 'twere, a Chappel; and every Store-house a Temple. And this Idol has more and more Early Votaries, than any other whatsoever; not only Old men being its Priests and Sacrists, but Young men are also its Adorers; and Children were
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of old dedicated to it, in *Ventilabro olim infantes collocabant, in futurarum divitiarum & affluentiae auspiciis*, 'twas an antient Custom to lay Infants to sleep in the Fan that winnow'd Corn, as a Good Auspice of their future Plenty and Abundance. But to understand plainly what *Mammon* is without Deity or Disguise, without Figure or Mystery, we have no more to do but to look to the 6th Verse of this Chapter, where he is set down in his pure and naked Nature, to be a *hundred Measures of Oil, and a hundred Measures of Wheat, i. e.* to be the Fruits and Products of the Earth, Corn, Wine, Oil, Gold, Silver, Jewels, &c. all that is Money and Money-Worth, is *Mammon*: and so the Word signifies in the Original, Treasure or Riches of any Sort: or as *Suidas* yet more critically, Superfluous or Unnecessary Riches.

And here by the way, this mightily commends the Policy which is taught us, that with such Vile, Superfluous, Unnecessary things we may purchase things Inestimable, and of the highest Importance; that with things Temporal, and Perishing even in the Using, we may procure things Eternal, even Everlasting Habitations. But so it is, God is pleased that we should trade with him for his Heavenly Treasures, as men traded at first with the *Indians* for their Gold and Jewels, with Beads and Glasses: Only we must observe the Rule *S^t Jerome* prescribes in such our Negotiation, We must give our Hearts to God, as well as our Goods; *male enim dividit*, says the Father, *qui animam Diabolo tribuit, opes Deo*; he's a false and deceitful Merchant, that offers his Goods to God, and his Service to the Devil; without Sanctity of Life there is no difference between Alms and Simony; between attempting to purchase the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, for Money; *Mammon*

joined with Righteousness is the Current Price of Salvation, but mixt with Sin is worse than the Dung of the Earth; this is *Mammon*.

And then in the second place, for the Condition or Qualification of it, the *Unrighteous Mammon*, or as it is in my Text, *the Mammon of Unrighteousness*, which is the same thing, this being only the Hebrew manner of speaking, which often uses the Genitive Case for the Adjective, or instead of an Adjective. Now *Mammon* is not call'd Unrighteous, because it is Unrighteous in it self; all the Creatures of God are Good, and Riches are the Choicest Part of those Good Creatures: Neither in regard that 'tis Unrighteous to possess them; contrariwise, they are the Gifts and Favours of God, and *beatus & dives*, the Rich and Blessed are not undeservedly made Synonyma's: But *Mammon* is call'd Unrighteous, because, for the most part, 'tis got Unrighteously, according to that Saying, *Omnis Dives aut iniquus est, aut iniqui Heres*, Every Rich man is either an Unjust Man, or the Heir of an Unjust: Or again, because it goes Unjustly from us in the Expence of Sin and Vanity. 'Tis call'd also Unrighteous in Opposition to the True Riches, as at *ver. 11*. If ye have not been faithful in the Unrighteous *Mammon*, who shall commit to your trust the True Riches? But though *Mammon* may be, and is, call'd Unrighteous upon these and the like accounts: yet it seems to be term'd Unrighteous in my Text upon a Particular and distinct Account from all these, which is set down *ver. 12*. *If you have not been faithful in that which is an Other Man's, who shall give you that which is your Own?* So that *Mammon* is principally styled Unrighteous here, because the Riches we employ are an *Other Persons*, and yet we employ them for our Advantage, as if they

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they were *our Own* : as the False Steward did his Lord's Goods. And Riches may be said not to be our Own in two Respects.

1. Because they are God's; as the Psalmist says, *The Earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof*. He is the True Proprietary; and the most rightful Possessors among Men, are but Stewards. 2. Because in the Law those things are only styled *propria*, our Own, which will stay with us, which are in our Power, and which we can dispose of at our pleasure: as Birds and Beasts which we take, and let go, and take again: but those which we have not thus at our Will and Command, are counted *Fera Nature*, of a Wild Nature. Now Worldly Riches, in a Moral account, are of this last Sort, Wild and Uncertain, no man is Secure of them, with any Care or Providence can hedge them in, *But they make them Wings*, as Solomon says, *and fly away*; They depart through their own default, or the default of others; we forfeit, or we lose them; they perish, or by a Secret Decree, pass to an other Master.

On these Considerations therefore, when ever we bestow a Charity, or any other Pious Benefaction, we may well account, we give but that which is at present in our power, and perhaps to morrow will not be: and again, that when we are most Liberal, we are but *de alimo munifici*, bountiful at an Others Cost; and we may say of our Alms, if we speak strictly, what Christ did of the Sitting at his Right hand and his Left in his Kingdom, *They are not mine to give*. Yet such is the Goodness of God, that he accepts our Robberies from him, as our Bounty to him; interprets our Trespases on his Royalties, and Purlainings of his Treasure, our Righteousness, Fidelity, and Wisdom; gives us an *Euge* for it, as the Lord

Lord of the False Steward did to him in the Parable. Not that he applauded his Falshood and Dishonesty, but the Subtilty and Dexterity he shew'd in it; as 'tis said — *subitis casibus ingenium*, for shewing a Present Wit in a sudden Streight, and making the best of a bad Accident. The Steward is prais'd, as we praise the Fox; not for the Mischief he does us, but for the Craft with which he does it. Or as a Judge may admire the cunning Fetches or Contrivances of a Thief, whom he thinks fit notwithstanding to condemn to the Gallows. We are not taught, by the Example of the Steward, to steal from our Neighbour to serve our Own, the Poors, or God's Interests; we must not cheat in our Trade to provide for our Children; rob on the High-way, or cozen the Exchequer to give Alms or build Hospitals. No, but if as the False Steward made Provision for his approaching Poverty at his Lord's Charges, we shall take of God's Abundance, of which he has made us his Stewards, and lay it out in Pious Works, there is no harm done; if, I say, we make the things of this World Instrumental to the obtaining the Next; if we make Riches (which are commonly a Snare, and lead so many to Perdition) conduce to bring us to the Kingdom of Heaven, God, who is our Lord and Master, will applaud this Divine Craft in us; who thinks himself only then to be Robb'd and Defrauded, when his Goods are not after this manner employed. And so I pass to the Use we are to make of the *Unrighteous Mammon*, which is,

To procure Friends with it.

Here I shall enquire, 1. How we are to make Friends with it; And, 2. What Friends we are to make.

make. How we are to make Friends with it, the Practice of the Steward will direct us, Who where a hundred Measures were due, required only fifty; again, where the Debt was a hundred, accepted of fourscore; *i. e.* in fewer Words, *By Giving our Riches.* There is nothing that makes Friends, equal to Bounty; a Gift, as it blinds the Eyes of the Wise, so it wins the Hearts of the Ingenious, and reconciles the Affections of the Averse. The antient *Heroes* held no Friendship so Sacred, as that which was begun with Gifts: a Goblet or Spear, a fair Horse or Armour given by the Parents, laid the Foundation of future Amity between their Posterity; and they often prefer'd such Amity before Alliance or Consanguinity: as *Tencer*, on this account, sided with the *Grecians* against the *Trojans*, though *Priam* was his Uncle, and his Mother a *Trojan*. But we need not seek prophane Story for the proof of this matter: *Solomon* tells us, *A Gift is as a Precious Stone in the eyes of him that has it, wheresoever it turns, it prospers.* And *Jacob* found this Course successful in appeasing his Brother *Esan's* wrath. God himself is pleased with Offerings and Sacrifices, with Alms and Oblations: *Thy Prayers are heard*, says the Angel to *Cornelius*, *Acts* 10. 4. *and thy Alms are had in remembrance in the Sight of God.* If we would write many Volumes of the Art of making Friends, we could not prescribe a more powerful Expedient than this of Liberality. A Gift is an Experienc'd Good-Will, a Demonstration of the Affection, as 'tis vulgarly call'd: he that Gives not, may Love; but he that Gives, has testified his Kindness.

But then in the second place, *What Friends are we to make?* We shall learn this best from the Rule *Christ* gives us, *Luke* 14. 12. to chuse our Guests.

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When thou makest a Supper, says he, call not thy Kinsfolk and rich Neighbours, but the Poor, the Maimed, and the Blind. Those which he would have us there make our Guests, he would have us here make our Friends. 'Tis the Practice in a great Part of Christendome, to give away large Estates and Possessions to lusty Men to sing *Latine* Prayers in behalf of the Living and the Dead, which the one hear not, and the other, for the most part, understand not; Prayers poured out by Number, not by Devotion; and that plentiful Relief that should be sent to the Hospital, is consum'd in the Coyent; which should feed the Hungry, and clothe the Naked, is given to maintain a Holy Sloth, and too often a Lewd Idleness; and it may be truly said of those that part with their Estates on this account, *that they part with them for a Song.* I know they maintain, That these *Evangelical Poor*, as they call them, are to be relieved in the first place, and the Poor through a hard Necessity in the second. But we neither find any such Doctrine, or yet such Persons in the Gospel: the Widows and Fatherless, the Sick and Aged, are there recommended to our Charity, and not the Voluntary, Sturdy, Ambitious, and affected Beggars, the Beggars that awe the States they live in. The Rule *Christ* gives us is, To make those our Friends, that cannot be our Friends again. These are they to whom the Corn and the Oil are to be imparted, or remitted. *Invite not the Rich, says he, lest they invite you again:* as if there were Danger in so doing, Danger of losing the Reward promis'd to Charity. Alms never shoots up to so large a Harvest, as when 'tis cast into Barren Soil; the greatest Sterility sends forth the richest Crop. And so I pass to my last Particular, The End of the Policy,

That

*That they may receive you into Everlasting
Habitations.*

As our Lord said, *There were many Widows in Israel in the days of the Prophet Elias, but he was sent to none of them, but unto Zarepath to a Woman that was a Widow*; so it may be said, Though there are many *Lazarus's* in the World, there may be but few that will be admitted into *Abraham's Bosom*: and therefore the Policy may not be so good to rely on them, to introduce us into that Place, from whence themselves shall be shut out. But yet if we consider, that in giving to the *Falsly Poor*, we may be *Truly Charitable*; and though our Money be cast away, our Good Purpose will not; we shall not trust to a Deceitful Policy, if we promise our selves, that those that are rejected and cast into Hell, may assist us to the attaining of Heaven; and that even these *Reprobates* may make us *Saints*. But to answer this and the like Objections: Whereas 'tis said in my Text [*that They may receive you*] as if the Poor, or *Mammon*, or Angels, or some other failing Power, were to receive us, the Words are to be taken Impersonally [*ye shall be received*:] Or else as having a Figure in them, a *Metonymy* of the Motive for the Effect, and so the Poor are said to receive us, when God or *Christ*, in Contemplation of our Charity to them, receives us.

Now to make some Application, and to conclude: Though things stand thus, that Men are of their Worldly Goods but *breves Domini*, short Possessors, and they may purchase with them Eternal Felicity and Glory, they generally neglect to make this Advantage by them. And we see some, when their

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Treasure is like a Mine, and their Store-houses resemble the Harvest and Vintage of the Year, yet their Covetousness so much exceeds their Abundance, that they cannot be content to do any Good with all they have ; their Business is to Gather, not to Use ; *cogitant quàm bene alii post se vivant, non quàm male ipsi moriantur* ; they are pleas'd to think how Happily others shall live after them, and consider not how Accurately themselves in the mean time Live and Dye. Again, on the other side, other Rich men as sottishly waste in Voluptuousness and Sensuality, what the former gripingly spared ; to gratifie a Lust, to purchase a Delicious Sin, they will pour out their Wealth without Measure, and think no Profusion too great : but to all Works of Piety and Charity they are Deaf, and a Publick Contribution, in their conceit, would undo them. And thus all the Advantages God has given them to procure their Salvation, serve only to encrease their Accounts at Dooms-Day, and to ascertain to themselves a greater Damnation : of all the Vast Riches they possess'd, there remains not one Monument of Liberality, but only fouler Sinks, and bigger Dunghills, an Ill Reputation, and a Corrupted Age. When *Alphonso* (the Good King of Arragon, who gave so much in Charity) was ask'd, What he intended, in such vast Donations, to reserve for himself ? answer'd, *Ea ipsa quæ dono*, the very things that I give. Which Saying, though it may be despised by those that are of a contrary Temper : as the rapacious Pharisees laugh'd at our Lord, and pity'd him, when he preach'd against Covetousness : yet at that Day, when Mens Words and Works shall be rewarded according to their Merit, the Words of King *Alphonso* will be found to have no less Wisdom in them, than Bounty : and then men will
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also understand, That all that they have Ill-Saved, or Spent, profits them nothing, but only what they have Piously or Charitably bestowed; that this is the only Wealth that benefits them, and never forsakes them; the Good Works, which, as St John says, follow them into the Other World.

But the Rich and Potent are not only concerned in the Policy taught in my Text, but those also of an Inferior Condition have their Names in God's *Census*, or Book of Cements for the Poor, and must not look upon themselves as exempted from the Duties of Charity. *Acts* 3. 6. says St Peter, *Gold and Silver have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. In the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk.* He that cannot clothe nor feed his Brother, possibly may heal him; who can Give him nothing, can Forgive him and pray for him. But we may keep here to the Letter of Giving Charity: for 'tis rarely seen, that any are so destitute, but they may give to the Destitute. *Christ* had not where to lay his Head, yet he had a Small Bag, out of which he could say to his Disciples, *Give something to the Poor.* And if those that count themselves the most Indigent, did compute, what pass'd through their Hands in a Year, (as *Seneca* says of Mens Time, *Non exiguum temporis habemus, sed multum perdimus*, We have not little Time, but spend much Idly) they might say of their undervalued Stock, *Non exiguum Mammonæ habemus, sed multum perdimus*, our Money would not be little, if we spent it not Idly. The Summs which slip away inconsiderately through the Fingers even of the Meaner Sort, would set Beggars on work, and knock the Shackles off from hundreds of Prisoners and Captives.

But let us all consider, of what Condition soever

we are, High or Low, that we have no long time either to abuse our Wealth, or to deceive our Selves with false Measures taken of our Actions. Some perhaps, who hear me this Day, may not have so much Leisure allowed them, as the Steward had, to change an *Item* in their Accounts; to say to a Poor Debtor, that owes them a hundred Measures, *Take thy Bill, sit down, and write fifty*; or *Take thy Bill, and write fourscore*. If any of us have a Lease or Patent ready to expire, we neglect no time to renew it: but we are not at all solicitous whether we lapse the Time of Grace, or forfeit our Heavenly Inheritance. How much wiser Tenants are we, than Christians? Patentees, than Heirs of Glory? We are all assured, that the Day of Death, the Dissolution of these Earthly Tabernacles, will come; the Day in which Wealth, Beauty, Greatness, Glory, and all other Worldly Advantages will profit us nothing; the Day in which the Rich and Potent, as well as the Poor and Mean (however Numerous their Friends and Attendants now are) must stand alone, and answer for what they have done in this Life; *in solatium ruine*, in Consolation of the Dreadful Circumstances of that Day, let us provide some Support, some Refuge, some Good Works, as Friends to stand by us, lest our Spirits break through intolerable Horrour and Despair! We will not remove from one House to another, without sending before Furniture, Provisions, and Servants, to receive us; and is it possible we should not care, what the Habitations are, in which we must abide to all Eternity? Whether they be Places of Refreshment, or Torment? Mansions of Bliss, or Prisons of Darkness and Horrour? If we value not what it becomes us to do in this Life, as Good Men, yet let us consider at least what it becomes

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us to do, as Wise Men: But, alas, Wisdom and Goodness are not two things! Had the Rich Man in the Parable had leave to return out of Hell, to have acted his Life a second time over upon Earth, he would not have deserved to have been call'd Fool again, for despising the Poor, and trusting in Full Barns and Enlarged Store-houses; he would sooner have clothed the Beggar in Purple, and have set him at his Table, and have taken himself his place among the Dogs: but the Season was past, and Leave and Opportunity to shew such Wisdom was not allow'd him. This, this Life is the Time of doing our Duty, of giving Largess and Charity to the Poor, and of performing every Good Work beside: if our Lord could say of himself, *I must work the Works of him that sent me, while it is Day; the Night cometh when no man can work*, Joh. 9. 4. then certainly it more highly concerns us to lay hold of the Season allow'd us to do God's Will: and this weighty Admonition is our Lord's, and not mine. — *Make to yourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into Everlasting Habitations.*

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The first of the pilgrims who arrived at the fort was a man named John Smith. He was a young man of about twenty years of age, and he was very brave and strong. He had been with the pilgrims for some time, and he had learned a great deal about the Indians. He was very popular with the Indians, and they loved to hear him tell stories of his adventures. He was also very good at fighting, and he had won many battles for the pilgrims. He was a very brave man, and he was very loyal to the pilgrims. He was a very good leader, and he was very kind to the Indians. He was a very brave man, and he was very loyal to the pilgrims. He was a very good leader, and he was very kind to the Indians.

The Fifteenth Sermon.

PSALM xi. 3.

*If the Foundations be destroyed : what
can the Righteous do ?*

THE preceding Verses run thus : *In the Lord put I my trust : how say ye to my Soul, Fly as a Bird to the Mountain ? For lo, the wicked bend their Bow, and make ready their Arrow upon the String, that they may privily shoot at the Upright in heart. If the Foundations be destroyed : what can the Righteous do ?*

That the Lord careth for the Righteous. defendeth them against the Machinations of the Wicked, as with a Shield, or, as it follows at the 7th Verse, *That the Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness, his Countenance doth behold the Upright*, is *prima Veritas*, the first Truth and Fundamental Article, that both comforts and confirms the Godly in their Godliness ; that while they continue to be faithful, God will continue to be favourable ; while they serve him, he will protect them ; while their Righteousness is immutable.

immutable, their State shall be invincible; at least their *Foundations* shall not be destroyed, in their greatest Dangers they shall have a Refuge, in their highest Exigents *they shall know what to do.*

The Time and Occasion of writing many Psalms are utterly unknown, and we have nothing but the bare Conjecture of Expositors for them, grounded upon the fancy'd comporting or agreeing of some Words in the Psalm with some Historical Passage: and in the great Obscurity and uncertainty of the Occasion of the present Psalm before us, all I can say is, It seems thus to have stood with *David* when he wrote it: He had cast the *Jebusites*, a Nation of the *Canaanites*, out of their Strong hold, the City of *Jerusalem* flank'd with the Fortrefs of *Sion*; which he made his Habitation, the Seat of his Kingdom, and of the Worship of his God. But as it is said of the foul Spirit in the Gospel, that when he was cast-out, he was restless as in a Desert, till he had regain'd his Possession: So it far'd with the *Jebusites* here, they could not sit down with the Loss of their Power and Dominion, digest the Disgrace of their Deities, and the baffling of their Confidences, hear the taunting Scoff of the *Lame and the Blind*, (which themselves had Ironically utter'd of their Idols according to the Sence of the *Hebrews*, not their own) retorted and verisy'd on them. These things prickt and stung them to the heart, and they could find no peace, till they had restored their Gods to their Glory, and themselves to their Country and Reputation, and that by destroying *David and his Foundations*. One while therefore they sought to subdue him by Force, another while by Stratagems and treacherous Practices, another while by Parley and friendly Advices, representing to him the Danger of his Condition, surrounded

surrounded by so many Nations of a Contrary Religion, to induce him to forsake his own, and to fly as a Bird to their Mountain.

But he, whose Heart was fixt and rooted in his God, at once encourages himself, and confutes his Enemies, with this Fundamental Principle, *That God is the sure Rock and Refuge of the Faithful*: beats them with his Argumentation and Reasoning, out of their Sophistry, as he had before by his Arms out of their Strong-holds. The Demonstration which he uses, is that which *Logicians* call leading to an *Absurdity*, and is the Strongest of all others: for it evinces, That if such an Assertion be not granted, then something must, which is a Contradiction to a confessed Principle. For example, *If the Foundations which I rely upon may be destroyed, then this Absurdity will follow, That the Righteous may be destitute of a Refuge, brought to that pass as not to know what to do.* The Minor, which for brevity is omitted, and ought to be subsum'd, is this, *But the Righteous cannot be destitute of a Refuge, brought to that pass as not to know what to do: therefore the Foundations I rely upon cannot be destroyed. If the Foundations be destroyed, what can the Righteous do?*

In the Words thus explain'd, we may observe these two General Parts:

I. The Design of David's Enemies, *It was to destroy his Foundations.*

II. The Absurdity of such their Design, or the Impossibility of it, *For otherwise the Righteous would not know what to do.*

I begin, first, with their Design,

Which was to destroy David's Foundations.

And what were the *Foundations* which the Psalmist

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here speaks of? For the Word is in the Plural Number, and the *Foundations* of a Kingdom may be many. Some *Material and Visible*, as Fortresses, Armies, Rocks, Mountains, &c. Others *Immaterial, and visible only in practice*, as Laws Civil and Ecclesiastical, which are its Moral Fortifications: for the Laws of a Land support it no less than its People, Wealth, Bulwarks; and whoever seeks to subvert these, though he attempts nothing against the Magazines and Strong-holds, yet he undermines the very Foundations. There is also an *Invisible Foundation* of a State, *which is God's Favour and Defence*, pointed at by the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chap. 4. ver. 5. in these words, *Over all the Glory shall be Defence*. And though *David* had a regard to all his other *Foundations*, this was the Chief, the Surest Rock in which he trusted, as himself professes *2 Sam. 22. The Lord, says he, is my Rock and my Fortress, he is the God of my Rock — and saveth me from violence*. His Rock was strong, but the God of his Rock was stronger; his Habitations stood upon the Rock of *Sion*, but then *Sion* again was founded upon God. And thus as *Ezekiel's* Vision was *rota in rota*, a wheel in a wheel; so *David's* Foundation was *Fundamentum in Fundamento*, a Foundation upon a Foundation. The Heathen had also in their Superstitious Way an *Invisible or Divine Foundation*: for as out of jealousy to their Neighbours they chose to plant their Cities upon Rocks and Hills, so they dedicated again those Rocks and Hills to the Protection of some Deity, which was the Rock of their Rock: and *Moses* seems to allude to this, *Deut. 32: 31.* where he says, *Their Rock is not as our Rock, even our Enemies themselves being Judges.*

Now in the first place, the Design of *David's* Enemies

enemies was to destroy *All his Foundations* : not only his Material and Visible ones, but also his Immaterial of his Laws, and his Invisible of the Deity in which he trusted : For the Gentiles had a conceit, that the Gods themselves were conquerable. They had a Sort of Godlings or lesser Gods, which they assign'd to the Guardianship of Springs and Trees, as *Nymphs* and *Dryades*, which they thought Mortal and extinguishable with those Springs and Trees. Other Great Gods again which they set over Kingdoms and Cities, and though they believ'd these last to be immortal : yet they fancy'd, when the Cities or Kingdoms over which they presided were subdued, that these Deities were also subdu'd.

Secondly, As the Design of *David's* Enemies was to destroy all his Foundations in general, of what kind soever : So it was to destroy them *Finally and Utterly*. For as our Lord says of the Providence of the Children of this World in Temporal things, *That they are Wiser than the Children of Light* : So they are also in their Malice and Mischievous Designs, they lay the Axe to the Root, they dig as deep to destroy, as others do to build. Says *S^t Paul*, *As a wise Master-Builder, I have laid the Foundation* : but these on the contrary as *Master-Destroyers* aim to rase the Foundation, knowing this to be the speediest way to make an absolute Destruction, for the Superstructures must follow these.

Thirdly, The Ways which the Enemies of *David* took to effect his Destruction, are exprest to be three, *Parley, Violence, and Stratagem*. *Parley* is implied at the first Verse, *In the Lord put I my trust, how say ye then to my Soul, Flee as a Bird to the Mountain*. *Violence* is intimated, ver. 5. *The Lord tryeth the Righteous, but the Wicked and he that loveth Violence, his*

Soul hateth. Stratagem is mentioned ver. 3. For lo, the Wicked bend their Bow, they make ready their Arrow upon the String, that they may privily shoot at the Upright in heart.

And now before we proceed any further, if we shall compare the Machinations of the Enemies of our *Israel* this Day, with those of the Enemies of *David*; if we stretch Plot upon Plot, and Conspiracy upon Conspiracy, as *Elijah* stretcht himself upon the dead Child, we shall find, that not only Limb answers to Limb, but that the Malice of our Adversaries exceeded that of *David's*, as much as the Dimensions of a Man exceed those of a Child.

1. We say, The Design of *David's* Enemies was to destroy *All his Foundations of what Kind soever*: and the Design of ours was as *Universal*, to destroy our Forts and Castles, our Ships and Ammunition, our Laws and Policies, our Prince and People: and though they knew they could not subvert our *Invisible Divine Foundation*, that the Eternal Omnipotent God was not to be subdu'd: yet they sought to deprave his Worship, and to corrupt his Religion, which would have deprived us of him, or have alienated him to us. It was not for their Interest to set up *Baal* against *Jehovah*, *Dagon* against the God of *Israel*: but as it was *Jeroboam's* interest to set up the *Calves and High Places* against the *Temple and Altar at Jerusalem*; so it was hugely their Interest to set up their Superstitious and Idolatrous Worship in the place of our pure and Holy, so inconsistent with their Anti-Christian Monarchy. And though the Enemies of *Israel* designed after the same manner to destroy all their Foundations, and All can be but All, yet one All may be greater than another, and our All, if we may believe Geographers, many times exceeds theirs.

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2. The Design of *David's* Enemies was *Fatal* and *Final*, and to extirpate utterly; not only, I say, to make a *total Destruction*, but to *destroy Totally*. And the same was the Design of our Enemies, only whereas the Malice of *David's* Enemies was weak and insignificant, they being Aliens, and at a Distance; rather a Disposition, than an Ability to hurt; only one of those kinds of Ill will, which *Aristotle* in his *Ethicks* says, *Is not furnish'd to do much Evil, and seldom grows up beyond Petulancy*, and the Trouble of them that are possess'd with it: Our Adversaries were Natives and in the Bowels of us, armed with Power, as well as Malice; and wanted not the Means and Opportunity to effect our Ruine, any more than the Will to plot it. *Can a Nation be born at once?* says *Job*. No, nor one would think be destroyed and brought to Nothing in a Day. The *Grecians* were ten Years in ruining *Troy*: and when our Lord said, *Destroy this Temple, and I will rear it again in three days*, the *Jews* supposing he spoke of the Temple of Stone, which was forty and six Years a building, heard his words as a Prodigy. But lo a People, that were our Adversaries, that could do more! And had not our Rock, or rather the Rock of our Rock, been Invincible, they had destroyed us; I say not in three days, but in three Minutes, in a Thought, in a Moment. Many, Alas! and of Various Perswasions and Pretences are the Adversaries of our Church: but as the Historian says of the Contentions *Rome* had in her Minority with the *Vei*i and the *Gabii*, and other petty Townships her Neighbours, that *they were but as the Squabbles of little Children about the Lap of their Mother*, not like those she had afterwards with *Carthage*, and other potent States, which were like the *Fatal Dissensions*.

sensions of grown Men, which seldom end without the Blood of the one or the other Party. So we hop'd it might be said of the Quarrels of our *Dissenting Brethren*, (though they troubled us about the Superstitions, the Rites of Religion, and the like) that their Exceptions were but *lucta circa matrem*, as the Brabbles and Wranglings of Children standing about the Lap of their Mother, not like the Mortal Enmities of those that plotted against us this day, whom nothing could satisfie, *but the Destruction of our Foundations, and that Totally and Finally*. But late times have given us experience, that the Malignity of these is not inferior to the others, not less black and bloody; and though they make such Out-cries against *Popery*, pretend to dread and detest nothing like its Return again into the Nation, yet they abstain not from its Practices, nor abhor to serve themselves with the Wickedest of its Principles. So that these two so seeming contrary Parties are not ill resembled to two fierce opposite Streams, which when they meet, roar and chide, but then friendly close and join. But while both *Papist* and *Puritan* stick at nothing, though never so impious, to subvert the Foundations of our truly pure and holy Religion, they plainly demonstrate, they have subverted in their own Hearts the Fundamental Principles of Christianity it self. But to proceed.

I said, Thirdly, That the Ways which the Enemies of *David* took to bring about his Destruction, were three, *Parley*, *Violence*, and *Stratagem*; and our Enemies took the very same Courses to effect ours.

I. *Parley*. The Danger of Parley is not easily seen, it pretends only to remove Misunderstandings, and to compose Differences in an amicable Way, and

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and *Book-Combats* have been ever held consistent with a *State of Peace* : but more Mischief has been done by this Close and Covert, than by Open and profess'd Hostilities ; and those that have defended themselves against Force, have been undone by Treaties ; many Camps and Cities have been lost by permitting a free Parley and Entercourse between the Souldiers, that could never have been stormed. And while simple and unskilful *Israelites* among us have play'd with this Danger, like Children upon the hole of the Asp, they have perisht by it, before they have understood that any Evil was near. How many were the Attempts of *Rome* in this kind upon our Glorious Queen *Elizabeth* at her first coming to the Crown ? how many flattering Epistles were there sent her from that See ? how many fatherly Admonitions ? What tender Care exprest for her Souls good ? What Sollicitude for her Temporal ? How were the Treasures, *i. e.* the Cheats of that Church offered to be commanded by her ? its Usurpt Authority to be put upon the Tenter for her accommodation ? She might have marry'd *Philip* King of *Spain* her Brother, if her fancy or interest had lain for it ; there was nothing so Unlawful, but it should have been dispens'd with ; so Infirm, but, after the manner of *Rome*, it should have been corroborated. Never, I may say, was the Way to Destruction more strowed with Roses ; never did the smooth Accents of the Tongue so vie with the soft Ayres of Instrumental and Vocal Musick ; till the Holy Father saw that his Artifices were seen through and despised :

And then he betook himself to the second Means, that of *Violence*. But, Good God ! how great was now the Change ? all the late harmonious Courtship was turn'd into Harshness and Discord ; the Blessings

sings into *Anathema's* or Curses ; nothing was heard but the Reproaches of *Heretick, Apostate, Accursed Woman* ; nothing but *Fulminations, Excommunications, Interdictions*, which may be call'd *Rome's Spiritual Violence*. Foreign Princes were stirr'd up against the Queen, open Invasions set on foot by Sea and Land, secret Conspiracies plotted at home ; Insurrections, Poysonings, Assassinations, Treasons of all kinds fomented and encouraged : which by Divine Providence being also rendred *bruta Fulmina*, idle Thunder, that made a Noise, and did no further Hurt, the Great Enemy of our Church and State and his Complices had recourse

In the Third place to *Stratagem*, to carry on their Designs in *tenebris*, with the dark and hellish Contrivance of the Powder-Treason this Day. I will not say with the Psalmist, *They put the Arrow upon the String, that they might privily shoot at the Upright in heart*, Alas ! Bows and Arrows are an antiquated and despicable Artillery in these days, being so far out-done by the Newer and rarer Invention of Execution and Cruelty, *Guns*, that they deserve not to be named for destroying Foundations, to be compared with the *Still*, and, for a time, *Silent Battery in the Cave* ; but which, when least expected, thunders louder than the Heavens, and overturns Towns and whole Cities with greater Violence than an Earthquake. The *Jebusites* were but rude and ignorant Engineers in comparison of those, who but with a little Change bear their Name, the *Jesuites* : these indeed are great Workers in Darkness, none ever before them dived so deep to undermine Foundations ; we may apply to them the words of the Prophet *Hosea*, *These Revolters are profound to make Slaughter* : For the *Jesuites* did not only *Acheronta movere*, stir Hell

Hell to promote their Plot, but they dug to Hell to carry it on. But their *Stratagem*, I was going to say, *was blown up* ; but, blessed be God, I cannot say so, *but is blown over*, and many more since to their own great Shame only and Confusion.

And now if we ask here, Why was all this Transport of Rage and Fury against us ? Why all this restless and unwearied Malice ? 'Twas still for the same Reasons that the Enemies of *David* were set on fire against him. We had dispossest them of their Dominion, retrench'd their Power, supplanted their Religion, derided their Lamé and their Blind, namely, their Images, detected their forged Miracles, degraded their Mock-Saints, their Hypochondriack *S^t Anthony*, their Fanatical *S^t Francis*, their *Bedlam Ignatius*, their *Chimera Giant S^t Christopher*, &c. and they could find no peace or rest in their Spirit, till they had restored these to their former Credit and Reputation, and that by making their Prophaners, their Worshippers. And by this we may see what would have been our Condition, in case our Adversaries could have brought about their Design ? For as the *Jebusites* were Idolaters, as well as the rest of the *Canaanites*, and the *Lamé and the Blind* with which they braved *David*, and defy'd the Host of *Israel*, were (as the most Learned conjecture) their *Tutelar Gods*, *Telefmatical* or *Magical Images* : So our Adversaries, however they seek to purge themselves with their Distinctions, are gross Idolaters : and just such a goodly Change as *David* should have made, if he had left the Eternal God, to trust in Stocks and Stones, is the Change we should make, if our Adversaries could prevail to make us leave *our Mountain* or Church to fly to theirs of Rome.

And, First, In regard that our Mountain is a *Clear Mountain*, enlightned by the bright Beams of the Word of God, which darts its Rays into every Corner of it: Or stands, as I may say, like a *Mercurius directorius* in every Path, and points the Right-Way to all that go by, *bidding them to walk in it*. But the Mountain of our Adversaries is always wrapt in Fogs and Mists: and yet, as if it were not Dark enough, those that profess to be Guides to it, blind the Eyes of all that are to ascend it: And as the Guards of Forts and Frontier Castles make those that enter into them first surrender their Weapons: so these make their Disciples and Profelytes resign their Reason and lay down their Understanding at the foot of the Mount, and go on for ever after in Ignorance and an Implicit Faith. And they do wisely in taking this Course: for 'tis not possible that any with their Reason about them should make any long Progress, where they meet so many gross Scandals or Stumbling-Blocks at every step: where they see the Scripture not only misinterpreted in some hard places, but in the most Easie industriously perverted to Countenance the foulest Errours, even Idolatry it self; and after they have swallow'd whole so many Contradictions no less to humane Reason, than to Divine Writ, where they are obliged to believe, that the Church which imposes these Monsters, *cannot Erre*; nay, that God has confirmed them with Miracles, shew'd Signs and Wonders more and more glorious to overthrow the Gospel of his Son, than he did at first to establish it. Signs and Wonders cry'd indeed every Market-Day among them, like the Fruits of the Earth, *i. e.* the Relation of them, but which were never seen by any Eye. For, as one well observes, Whereas our Lord wrought his Miracles

cles to make Believers, the Church of *Rome* requires that men should be Believers, before they see any of her Miracles, *i. e.* should be trained up to swallow Lies and Impostures.

Secondly, As our Mountain is a Lightsome and Clear Mountain, so 'tis also a *Safe* : whereas that of our Adversaries may be likened to the *Hills of Robbers*, which the Psalmist speaks of, where nothing is heard of but Depredations, the continual Pillaging and spoiling of Travellers ; men go up to *Rome* as to a great *Fair*, where *Themselves* are bought and sold ; Confessions, Pardons, Penances, Indulgences, Dispensations, Pilgrimages, &c. aiming all at the Purse, and not at the Good of the Soul : and who shall look no further than our English Chronicle, will find, that the *Universal Pastor*, when he exercised his Usurp'd and Tyrannical Power in this Realm, was not content to fleece his Sheep only, but tore off the very Flesh from their Bones.

Thirdly, *Ours is our own Mountain*, we are in it ; but our Adversary's is more than a thousand Miles distant, and many other Mountains are to be past over before we can come to it ; and those that with a tame Simplicity delight to pay Homage to the Usurp'd Majesty of that Mount, travel many a dangerous and weary League, before they can attain the Abuse they seek : And sad was the Condition of this Nation, when upon every great Controversie to be judged, every great Preferment to be collated, every great Sin to be absolved, men were transferr'd to the See of *Rome*, *corpus cum causa*, themselves as well as their Cause ; and where, if they sped in their Pretences, they often miscarry'd in their Journey. We may therefore say of those that affect to be Profelytes to this Mountain, what *S^t Paul* says of the *Corinthians*,

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That they more gladly submitted to those that took of them, that brought them into bondage, than to those that were Sincere towards them, and abounded in labour for them. Or else we may upbraid them, as the Prophet Hosea did Ephraim, *Ephraim is like a silly Dove without heart, they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria, i. e. to the places of their Captivity and Oppression:* So these delight in those that plume them and tyrannize over them, that seal up their Eyes in Darknes, and make them believe they towre towards Heaven and the Regions of Glory, till they find themselves in the Precincts of Eternal Night. And as Ephraim was not only made a Prey, but a Scorn for their Folly, *This shall be their Derision,* says the Prophet, *in the Land of Egypt;* so those among us that call to go to the *Spiritual Egypt*, shall be mock'd in the Day of Great Accounts, as well as Condemned: For what remains for those that would not be warned, but to be laugh'd at? for those that chuse Destruction, but to be derided when they are fallen into it? In the mean time let our Adversaries triumph in the Victories they obtain by their threefold Machinations, *Parley, Violence, and Stratagem:* for though they sometimes prevail upon Unstable Souls, prepar'd by their own Vanity for Ruine, yet they cannot prevail against *our Cause*; they may deceive some *particular Persons*, but they cannot overthrow our *Foundations*, no more than the Enemies of David could his. Which brings me to my second General Part, The Absurdity or Impossibility of the Design of *David's Enemies*, To destroy his Foundations: for then the Righteous would not know what to do.

If the Foundations be destroyed, what can the Righteous do?

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What shall I do ?] is the Expression of a Person driven to the greatest Exigence, and knows not which way to turn himself in the Difficulties he is in : they are the Words of the Unjust Steward in the Gospel, when he was turn'd out of his Stewardship, *What shall I do ?* says he ; *Dig I cannot, and to beg I am ashamed.* The only two Means of Livelihood left to those that are reduced to the Extreamest Poverty, *Labour* and *Begging*, were taken from him ; the one by *Shame*, and the other by a *Soft Education*. Such an Utter Distress as this the Words of my Text imply, they being a Negative by way of Question, which is the strongest kind of Negative. *What can the Righteous do ? i. e.* They can do nothing. And if any say, Yes, the Unjust Steward had still recourse unto his old Arts of Cheating and False reckoning : and so *David* and other Righteous men, in case their *Foundations be destroyed*, may make some shift, they *may fly as a Bird to the Mountain of their Enemies.* I answer, That this is not to be admitted, Unlawful Remedies come not so much as into the Consultation of the Righteous, be their Distress never so great ; what is Wicked, is to them Impossible ; and what they cannot do justly, they cannot do at all. *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God ?* said *Joseph*, when his wanton Mistress tempted him, *i. e.* I cannot possibly do it. He could have done it actually, but he could not do it honestly ; and what was impossible to his Vertue, he resolv'd to be impossible to his Practice. But the Supposition here it self is vain, *That the Foundations of the Righteous can be destroyed.*

But how ! some will say, *not possible to destroy their Foundations ? Why, Commanders will affirm, that no Place is impregnable, and consequently, that there*
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are no Foundations but may be destroyed. When *Philip of Macedon* was told of a strong Place, which, by reason of the steepness, rockiness and narrowness of the Ascent to it, was Inaccessible; he ask'd in derision, *If an Ass laden with Gold could not get up to it?* intimating, that no place was impregnable to Force and Fraud both. But the Distinction I gave before of a *Visible and Invisible Foundation*, answers all such Objections. *David*, beside his Rock, as ye have heard, had the Rock of his Rock, namely, *his God*. 'Tis the *Invisible Divine Foundation* that is the Security of the Visible. No City or Fortress is safe by its natural or artificial Strength: for as the Psalmist says, *A horse is but a vain thing to save a man*: so Rocks and Bulwarks are but vain things to save a City; *Except the Lord keepeth it, the Watchman waketh but in vain*. But on the other side, if he be the Rock and Defence, if he be the *Sion himself unto Jerusalem*, no Force, no Stratagem whatsoever can prevail against it, but *Jerusalem on Earth* shall be as invincible, as *Jerusalem in Heaven*, whose Builder and Maker is God.

And if any say, What is this to us, who are not to promise our selves the *Priviledges of Israel*? I answer, If we be Faithful like them, we may promise our selves God's protection no less than they. For, as *Saint Peter* says, *God is no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation they that fear him, and work Righteousness, are accepted by him*. We have a Kingdom, thanks be to Providence, more strongly fortify'd by Nature, than *Israel* was; founded, as the Psalmist says the World is, *upon the Waters, He laid it in the Waters, and founded it upon the Flouds*. And though our Foundations

dations be moveable and fluctuating, yet their Mobility and Mutability being only Local, and not Substantial, they are not less permanent. We may compare our *Political Foundations* also with *Israel's*. But be our *Material* or *Moral Foundations* what they will, our *Invisible* is the same with theirs: For God is not only our *Founder*, but our *Foundation* too; he has not only founded us *By*, but *On himself*. He brought us one of the first of the Nations out of the Darkneſs of Paganism to the Light of the Gospel; and again one of the first of the Nations out of the Bondage of *Spiritual Babylon* to the Liberty of the Truth, and free Use of his Word; and he has not only given us more Excellent Ordinances, than he did to his people *Israel*, but many Advantages even above our Fellow-Christians; and no Church can boast more truly than ours, *That 'tis built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ himself being the Chief Corner-Stone*; and what is this, but to be Founded on God himself? And 'tis our Reliance on this our Invisible Foundation, which makes us with *David* not to fear the Designs of our Enemies upon our Material and Visible. For though God has made us no particular Promise concerning our Temporal Prosperity, in case we keep his Commandments, as he did to *Israel*; yet we may rest assured on his Holy and Divine Nature and Promises in general: which are to Love and Protect the Righteous; and not only *Israel*, as the Psalmist says, *but all that put their Trust in the Lord, shall be as Mount Sion, which shall not be removed, but standeth fast for ever*. And the truth is, that which is said of Temporal Kingdoms, *Iustitia Thronum firmat*;

mat, Justice supports the Throne, may be affirmed of God's Spiritual Kingdom in the World, his Justice and Goodness establishes his Dominion in the Hearts of Men. For if it were not so, That the Lord regarded the Righteous, this great Incongruity would produce another great Incongruity and Irregularity, *The Righteous*, as the Psalmist says, *would put their hand to Iniquity*, i. e. they would be no longer Righteous, they would make Justice and Piety no more their Business and Concern, if there were no Regard in Heaven for these things : and so God would lose his Obedience when he neglected Good Men. Let us therefore be careful of our Duty, and we need not be solicitous for our Safety ; let us firmly rely upon God in well-doing, and believe that our Trust in our Divine Invisible Foundation is not merely Chimerical or Imaginary, and while we fail not it, it will never fail us ; but the Business of this Day shall be the business of the Year round, *viz. to praise and magnifie our Foundation, for protecting and preserving our Foundations* : and these Lauds and Thanksgivings, if they be Cordial and Real, will create us new Occasions of Lauds and Thanksgivings, even daily Mercies and Blessings, I say, if they be Cordial and Real, not only Verbal and Vocal ; not only express'd in Bells and Bonfires, Noises and Excesses, but in true Piety and Devotion ; as our *Prayer of General Thanksgiving* teaches us, *In shewing forth God's Praise not only with our Lips, but in our Lives ; by giving up our selves to his Service*, and so forth. For though 'tis impossible to solemnize Publick Joy and Thanksgiving, without Publick Expressions of them : yet these Publick Expressions should be but the Outward Signs and Significations of the Inward Sense we have
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of God's Benefits, and the Gratitude that dwells in our Hearts, and which ought chiefly to be shew'd in the Duties of Religion, in the Acts of Mercy and Charity in a Day of Mercy and Deliverance ; in the Reformation of whatsoever is contrary to the Divine Will in us, and the like. 'Tis not enough therefore that our Streets resound with Festivity and Joy, or yet that we celebrate God's great Mercies in Psalms and Hymns sung to the Organ by *Asaph* and other Chief Musicians, but every *Faithful Person* must be a *Musician* ; and every *Grateful Heart*, that has been delivered, an *Instrument* of God's Praise.

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, Worship, and Thanksgiving, this Day forth and for evermore. Amen.

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The Sixteenth Sermon.

JOHN xvi. 23.

—*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.*

THESE Words are part of our Lord's Farewel-Speech to his Disciples, when he was to leave the World: the unexpected News of which did so afflict them, that they had not the power (as himself takes notice, ver. 5.) so much as to ask him any Question concerning it. *But now I go to him that sent me, and none of you ask, Whither goest thou? but because I have said these things unto you, Sorrow hath filled your heart.* And very deservedly: for what more amazing, more Ominous Tidings could they have heard, than that he, for whom they had forsaken all they had, should after that forsake them? than that he, that had put Enmity between them and the World, should abandon them

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to the World? he in whom they had plac'd all their Ambition, all their Hope, should at last leave them in a Riddle? *A little while and ye shall not see me, and again, a little while and ye shall see me.* To raise therefore their drooping and disconsolate Spirits he promises them a double Advantage by his Departure, and which could only arrive to them by his Departure. 1. That they should receive the Holy Ghost, who would establish their Faith, and wonderfully rejoice their Hearts, by assuring them of the truth of the Doctrines he had taught them, and of their own Divine Mission. 2. That they should be under the immediate Care of the Father, by reason of whose Almighty Protection they would have no Cause to deplore his Absence, or in the least to wish for his Corporal Presence again: for they would find their Dependence on the Father much more happy, than the following his Steps through the Cities of *Palestine*. The Words of my Text relate to the latter of these two Advantages, *Their being under the immediate Care and Protection of the Father.* While our Lord abode with his Disciples, he supply'd all their Wants, solv'd all their Doubts, stopt the mouths of all their Maligners: but he let them know, *that his Father was Greater than he*, and would perform all these things in a more uncontroul'd and unlimited manner, than he had done, when he acted only in the Flesh by his Commission; that the Using only of his Name to the Father would be more Beneficial to them, than his Person had formerly been: for though in many things he had been kind to them, there was nothing so Precious, nothing so Difficult, nothing so Wonderful, but if they pray'd for it in his Name, the Father would bestow it on them. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.*

In

In this Singular Priviledge and Prerogative promised by our Lord to his Disciples, there are three things very remarkable :

I. The Person with whom they are to have it, *The Father, — he will give it you.*

II. The Measure in which they were to have it ; it is a Measure indeed unlimited and without Measure, *Whatsoever ye shall ask, ask what you will, he will give it you.*

III. By what Means they are to obtain it, by asking in Christ's Name, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name.*

I begin with the first of these, The Person with whom they are to have this Singular Priviledge,

The Father.

This was a comfortable Promise of our Lord's to his Disciples, if they had then understood it, as they afterwards did : but when the Words were spoken, they were but as a Parable or Proverb to them, as 'tis ver. 25. *These things have I spoken unto you in Proverbs, the time will come that I shall speak no more unto you in Proverbs, but I shall shew you Plainly of the Father.* How was that ? in what fashion did he afterwards shew them plainly of the Father ? By his Charismata, the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost which they received from him, and which bore the very Character of the Father stamp't upon them : *For every Good and perfect Gift, as St James says, is from above, and cometh from the Father of Light.* And thus he shew'd them more plainly and convincingly of the Father, than he did to Philip, when he said, *Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip ? he that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father :*

ther : For he shew'd them not the Father now in the Person of another, but in their Own, in his Divine and Omnipotent Power displayed in themselves. And this was not only a *Plain and Evident*, but a *Gracious Revelation of the Father* ; which as it improv'd their Knowledge of him, so it gave them also Demonstrations of his Love and Favour. The Father was both gracious to them, and present with them before, under the Law ; *he was their God, and they were his People* : but after they had embrac'd the Gospel he sent his Son into the World to preach, they were admitted into a Nearer Relation ; and were not only call'd *the People and Servants*, but *the Children of God*, the adopted Brethren of *Christ* ; and the Father of Heaven and Earth was appropriated by our Lord no less to them, than to himself ; *I go*, says he, *to my Father and to your Father, to my God and to your God*.

And this being the blessed Condition not only of the first Disciples, but of all true Believers since, I cannot chuse but take Occasion from hence to say, That those Christians are not sensible of their own Priviledge and Dignity, that go a Compass to God, when they are allowed the Directest and Shortest Way to him ; who keep a Distance, when they are invited and encouraged to make a Near and familiar Address ; out of an affected Humility move them, that they may move her, that she may move *Christ*, that *Christ* may move the Father. What a trifling Ambages is this, after our Lord has promised an Immediate Access ? and upon no better ground, but because, forsooth, the like is practised in the Courts of Earthly Princes ; where Strangers and Unknown Persons are not allow'd to make their Approach to the King without the Introduction of some in Place.

Alas !

Alas ! to the Court of Heaven there comes no Strangers or Unknown Persons, all the Suters there are Sons, and these use not to implore the help of Servants, but being first in Power and Place themselves, go directly and boldly to the Throne of the King their Father : as *S^t Paul, Heb. 4. 16.* encourages the Faithful to do, *Let us come boldly,* says he, *to the Throne of Grace :* and our Lord at the 16th Verse of this Chapter speaks, as if his own Mediation were not always necessary : *At that day,* says he, *ye shall ask in my Name, and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.* Those that believe that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, as the Apostle says, *are born of God, and begotten of his Spirit,* and they need no other Advocate to speak for them, but the Spirit, and such their Propinquity by Faith ; and to distrust their Interest, were to distrust God's Love and *Christ's* Truth ; and we may say of such a Diffidence, what one says of the like in humane Alliance, — *peccat, Qui commendandum se putat esse suis,* he sins against the Right of Kindred, that thinks he needs to be recommended to his own Relations.

Therefore, though we decline not, with the ranker Socinians, the Intercession of *Christ*, who say, He is mere Man, and not God, and consequently that all Prayers made to him are idolatrous : Nor yet comply with the more allay'd and qualify'd Poyson of others of them, who allow it lawful to pray to *Christ*, but not necessary : yet we may vindicate the Prerogative given to a Disciple in my Text, against the *Shew of Wisdom, in Will-Worship and Humility,* practis'd in the Church of *Rome*. For we who are rightly instructed in the Close Conjunction of the
Father.

Father and the Son, that teach he is both God and Man, know it is indifferent, whether we supplicate the Father or the Son; whether with our Lord himself we say, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit*: or whether with St Stephen, *Lord Jesu receive my Spirit*, who praying after this manner, is said also to have call'd upon God. And in truth, when our Lord sends his Disciples in my Text to his Father, he neither extinguishes his own Adoration, nor Mediation: but sends them from his *Humane Nature*, as I may say, to meet them again in his *Divine*. And this is the true Importance of his sending them to the Father: but they were not capable at this time of receiving the Doctrine of his Divinity: for a little before, in plain terms without a Figure, he had discoursed to them of his Death and Passion, and those to whom it was a hard Saying, *That they should eat his Flesh and drink his Blood*, would have thought it a much harder to have heard, *That he was the Eternal God, and could yet be Crucify'd by Wicked men*. Not willing therefore to force their Reason either by his Argumentation or Authority, he let this Mystery alone to be revealed in due time by the Holy Ghost, and establish'd their Comfort on a Foundation more easie to be conceived by them, *the Goodness and All-Sufficiency of the Father*: For however they did believe their Master to be an Extraordinary and Divine Person, they could not chuse but believe their God was Greater; and if it were a happiness to follow the Son, it must be yet a higher Felicity to be Favourites to the Father, of whom the whole Family of Heaven and Earth is named.

Now this being the Condition which a Disciple was left in at his Lord's Departure, he had no reason to mourn and languish for his Absence; with St *Augustine*

fine to desire to see *Christum in ore*, Christ's natural face again, while he enjoyed *Christum in Patre*, Christ in the power and presence of the Father. When a less Person at his Departure gives us the Favour of a Greater, we may say, He does not Desert us, but bestows his Absence on us. But *Christ's* Care of his Disciples and kindness to them will be seen yet more in the Unlimited Measure in which they were promised God's Favour, express'd in these Words, *Whatsoever ye shall ask— he will give it you.* Which is the next thing I am to explain.

Whatsoever ye shall ask— he will give it you.

This was a large Promise, and yet as largely and stupendiously made good. For, 1. Such was the Power of a Disciple by Prayer upon Earth, that he could cast out Devils, chase away all Diseases, heal all Infirmities, call the Dead out of their Grave, and send the Living into it. 2. Such was his Power in the Sea, that when the Ship was become a Prey to the merciless Element, and nothing but Death and Desperation appear'd to all others, a *St Paul* could say, *Not one of the Company shall perish.* And why so? Because he had pray'd, and God had given him the Lives of them that sail'd with him. 3. Such was his Power in Heaven, that the Holy Ghost stood press'd and ready, as I may say, upon the laying-on of the Apostles hands, as upon a Sign given, to descend in all his various and wonderful Endowments. *St James* notes, that *Elijah* by the power of prayer *shut the Windows of Heaven, and caus'd a Dearth*; and again *open'd them, and made Plenty*: But the Prayers of the Apostles wrought not only Wonderful Effects in the second Region of the Air, in the Magazines of

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Snow and Rain, but entering into the Heaven of Heavens call'd down Showres of Supernatural and Divine Graces ; And though before the time of *Christ*, it was said, *That 'twas not known, that God so hearkened to the Voice of a Man*, as he did to *Joshua* commanding *the Sun to stand still* : yet after *Christ's* ascension, he frequently hearkened to the Voice of Men, and effected greater Wonders : For after this Promise was once of force, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you* ; nothing was impossible, nothing was difficult to a Disciple of *Christ*.

But some perhaps will say, That it does not appear that this Promise was fulfilled according to the Extent and Latitude of it, even to the Apostles themselves, not to say how little of it has been made good to the Faithful since. For undoubtedly *S^t Paul* was not the only Person that *prayed thrice*, i. e. often and instantly, *that the Thorn in his Flesh might be taken away*, and was not heard : but others also of the Apostles and first Planters of the Gospel made many earnest Supplications for Success to their Endeavours and Deliverance in their Persecutions, and were not answered in their Petitions. So that this Promise, *Whatsoever ye shall ask*, &c. seems to be *μεταμενοι*, a Promise with Repentance, which was never made good.

To this may be said in general, what *S^t Paul* says of all God's Promises, *That in him they are Yea and Amen*, i. e. Truths which are ratified with Performances. But when we meet with such General and Unlimited Expressions, as this in my Text, *Whatsoever ye shall ask, he will give it you*, though we ought to look upon them as no more than what God is both able and willing to perform, when any just Cause shall require, yet they are only then to be expected.

pected from him, when a Just Cause does require : For we must not imagine, because he promises according to the Greatness of his own Power and Goodness, that he promises according to the Extravagance of Mens Lusts and Phancies ; because he promises Liberally, that he promises also, like Herod, Licentiously ; who at a wanton Banquet engaged the one half of his Kingdom to a dancing Damsel, and gratify'd a Harlot with the Head of a Saint. God's Unlimited Promises are to be understood like the Unlimited Promise of the Good Samaritan, when he left the Wounded Man in the Inn : *Whatsoever thou spendest more*, says he to the Host, *I will give it thee*, i. e. in Order to the hurt man's Recovery ; the Credit did not extend to the Purchase of the Inn, in case his Guest had desired it. And if we shall thus receive the Words of our Lord *cum grano Salis*, as they say, but with two Grains only of prudent Interpretation cast into them, we shall understand their just Latitude and Extent. *Whatsoever ye shall ask, he will give it you*, i. e. *si justum, si rationabile*, if it be Righteous, if it be Reasonable.

First, If it be Righteous, Righteous in the Matter, Righteous in the End, and Righteous in the Manner of the Petition. 1. *Righteous in the Matter*, if it be something Pious or Charitable that is pray'd for, something for God's Honour, or the Spiritual Advantage of the Votary, something, in a word, worthy to concern and engage Heaven in : for if men shew themselves over-much in love with the things of this Life, too solicitous for that which is Vile and Transitory, when they have the Promise of things Eternal, this declares a Degenerateness in their Affections, and an Indecorum that is reprovabale, and not rewardable, as 'tis said, *indecorum est ei curare de*

cibo, qui militat de regno, Care of the Belly and the Kitchen, ill becomes him, that is in pursuance of a Kingdom. Such as these, while they pray to God, despise him; and let them not hope, while they set at Nought the Glories of Heaven, that he will regard their abject Desires; he promised to give to them that ask'd in his Son's Name, not in the Name of the World.

2. *Righteous in the End*. The End of what men desire should be the Glory of God: for if it be to satisfy their Pride, Revenge, Concupiscence, &c. 'tis enough again to put an Embargo upon their Requests, as St James says, *Ye ask, and ye receive not, because ye ask for your Lusts*: and though God has promised to have his Ears open to faithful Prayers, he has not engaged to assist Sin, or to be accessory to Wickedness.

3. *Righteous in the Manner*, if men lift up pure and holy Hands, sincere and faithful Hearts, without Hypocrisy and without Presumption, neither doubting nor tempting God: constant, but with resignation; devout, but yet humble; Zealous and Fervent, but without Murmuring and impatience. *Heaven is taken by Violence*, but 'tis by an Agonistical, not a Hostile Violence; by contesting with our own Sins, not by quarrelling with God; his Kingdom is not to be storm'd after the manner the Poets feign'd the Giants to assault *Olympus*, but to be conquered by Submission, Duty, and Devotion; God is to be wrestled with, as Jacob did with the Angel, in Faith and Prayer; and they are brutish, who, because he has promised his Servants shall have power *With* him, expect to have a power *Over* him.

And thus as our Prayers must be *Righteous*, have nothing in them repugnant to God's Holiness and

and Majesty ; so, secondly, they must be *Reasonable*, *i. e.* agreeable to God's Divine Will : for *Reasonable* here is not to be measur'd by what is Reasonable to us, but to God ; that which is often Good and fit in our Eyes, is not so in his. If therefore, as St *John* says, *we ask according to his Will, he heareth us*. And a thing may be supposed to be ask'd according to his Will three Ways.

I. If it be not contrary to his *Decrees*, something which he has predetermined : for these are immutable, and *though* Noah, Daniel, or Job, *should intercede, they should not prevail* : again, as reducible to these, if the Prayer be not against the *Decrees or Laws of Nature* : For though I confess the Promise made to the Apostles in my Text, relates chiefly to things of a Miraculous Nature : yet the Promise in that part is not to be extended beyond the Apostles Own Persons, or the Time of the first planting the Gospel. To bring about some great Designs of his in the World, God thought fit to interrupt and discompose the Order of Nature ; but 'tis not for Men, at their Pleasure, to think to do the same : Miracles, 'tis true, were wrought by Men, but they were never wrought by the Will of men ; and 'tis a Fanatick Presumption to tempt God in this kind, when they are not mov'd to it by a Divine Spirit. And if Miracles were to be perform'd at the asking of every Follower of *Christ*, if every Prophet or Preacher of the Gospel in these days might divide the Sea, and call down Fire from Heaven, every faithful Commander cause Hail-Stones to be cast from the Clouds upon his Enemies, and the like ; not only the Harmony of the Creation, the Laws of Agents and Patients would be confounded, but the Harmony of Religion : For if such a present certain Impetration
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of all things of this Life did attend every true Christian Professor, that their Prayers were answered with a Miracle, who would not be a Professor or Believer on these Terms? and what Praise were it to be a Believer? The Congregation of the Faithful would be encreased on this account, but the Vertue of Faith would be wholly destroyed.

2. If that which is pray'd for, be not foreseen by God to be hurtful to him that prays, as 'tis said, *dando irascitur, & non dando misereatur*, if he gives, he's angry; and if he denies, he's merciful. *If a Child asks of his Father a Fish, says our Lord, will he give him a Serpent?* Or if he asks a Serpent instead of a Fish, will he give him a Serpent? The Gentiles indeed complained, that their Gods, which were Devils, easily granted them Evil things, but were inexorable when they sought Good things at their hands, *Evertere Urbes totas optantibus ipsis Dii faciles*: But the Father of Heaven and Earth gives only Good things to his Children.

3. If there be not something that is Better for the Petitioner, than that which he prays for, though Good; and which undoubtedly he would have desired before it, if he had understood it: and thus 'tis said again, *Non tribuit quod vellem, ut tribuat quod malem*; God gave me not what I ask'd, that he might give me what I aim'd at; he denied the Form of my Request, that he might grant what was more Advantageous for me. And 'twas with this purpose of conferring a Greater Benefit than was ask'd, that God denied St Paul praying thrice, that *the Thorn in his Flesh might be taken away*: for he gave him his Grace to support him in that Temptation or Affliction, whichsoever it was, which was better for the Apostle, than to have removed the Evil: for that would

would have deprived him both of the Tryal and reward of his Vertue. And on this account 'tis said, *Heb. 5. 7.* of our Lord's praying that the Cup of his Passion might pass from him, *That he was heard in that he fear'd*, though God made him drink up the very Dregs of that bitter Potion.

And thus we see, though the Promise made in my Text extends not to the Exorbitant Desires of fond Men, nor yet to the Mistakes or Weaknesses of those that are Pious and Righteous, yet it reaches to all their great and important Concerns, to all that is behoof ful and best for them, that 'tis commensurate to God's Goodness and Wisdom; and 'tis not to be imagin'd, that when he promises his Creatures to be merciful to them, he obliges himself to do any thing unworthy of his Majesty; that when he says, he will hear their Prayers, he divests himself of his Sovereignty, renounces his Wisdom, or any other of his Attributes. We must not therefore liken God to *Antigonus* King of *Macedon*, that was Sir-named Δω-*σων*, or the *Giver*, for giving much in Words and little in Deeds, because upon every trifling Petition he does not unframe the World, or break the Course of Providence. The Words of our Lord, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you*, as they are not to be swallow'd crudely, as if a *Fortunatus's* Cap were promised; so neither on the other side are they to be received with Doubting and Suspicion, as if they were fallacious and deceiveable: For in case their Petitions are retarded, or not answered in kind, it becomes not Christians presently to entertain thoughts like the Heathen, who were perswaded that the Winds had power to scatter their Prayers before they reach'd Heaven, *Terribilisq; Notus jactat mea verba precesque*: nor yet, should it be

be so that their righteous Requests succeeded not to their Expectation, are they to stagger in their Faith like *Cato*, who because his honest Vows for *Pompey* and the Commonwealth were not heard against the Usurpation of *Cæsar*, doubted of a Providence. Both this melancholy Mis-giving, that God often regards not our Prayers, though they are Just; and the other Sanguine Folly and Credulity, that it is fit for him to grant whatever is desired, spring from one and the same Root, *viz.* the *Immoderate Love of Earthly things*: For the truly Faithful, who set their Affection on things above, feel neither such Flashes of fond Hopes, nor Damps of black Despair: but being Indifferent to Worldly things, and wholly resign'd to God's good Will and Pleasure, they can think it reasonable, that the Ends of his Providence, and the Interests of his Glory should be serv'd in the first place. And then for those that depend and hang on *Christ* in hopes only of Preferment in his *Imagin'd Temporal Kingdom*, if his Followers for the Loaves, his Disciples, as I may call them, of the Basket, be disappointed, 'tis no great marvel, nor matter: for 'tis not said, Whatever ye shall ambitiously, wantonly, or any other way inordinately covet, ye shall receive: but, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you, i. e.* Whatever ye that are my Disciples shall duly pray for, if you request it in my Name, as nothing is difficult to my Father, so you will find there is nothing so precious that for Love of me he will not grant you. Which brings me to my last Part, The *Means* by which we are to obtain our Requests, *By asking in Christ's Name.*

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Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name.

Though all the Favour Men receive from God is in the Name, or for the Sake or Merits of *Christ*, yet even that Meritorious and prevailing Name will benefit them nothing, unless they be Faithful Persons, or such as are dispos'd to be so, such as those to whom the Promise in my Text is made; and no small Emphasis or Stress is to be put in this Particle [*Ye*] whatsoever *Ye* shall ask, *Ye* that are my Disciples, *Ye* that have received me as coming from the Father, believed my Miracles and my Doctrine, rely'd upon my Promises, continu'd with me from the beginning to the end, notwithstanding the Scandal that so many others took at the Meanness of my Condition, and the Severity of my Precepts. The Promise, I say, is not Universal to all Men; no, nor yet to the mere titular Professors of Christianity, who (as the *Jews* of old cry'd, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, even when they were Idolaters and Apostates, so) cry in these days, *Lord, Lord*, but do not the Will of God. A Vain and Superstitious Citation of *Christ's Name* will avail none in their Prayers, his Name is no Charm; and if there be no Virtue in the Users of it, there will be as little in the Letters or Sound as in other Names. Which the Sons of *Sceva* the *Jew* found *Acts* 19. when they call'd over the Evil Spirits the Name of the Lord *Jesus* in imitation, but not with the Faith of *S^t Paul*: for the Name protected them not, but left them to the Outrage of the Devil, strengthen'd, and not subdu'd by the undue Invocation of it. Saint *Peter* best interprets these Words [*in my Name*] *Acts* 3. when he cur'd the Lame man in the Name of *Christ*, *His Name*, says

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he, *through Faith in his Name has made this man Strong.* And our Lord himself, *John 15. 7.* shews, that 'tis not the Vocal, but Vertual Using of his Name that prevails, *If you abide in me, says he, and my Words in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.* So that the true *Quatenus*, or Reason of the Return of men's Prayers, the Secret wherein their Strength lyes (as *Samson's* did in his Hair) is *their Discipleship to Christ*, or in other words, their doing the Will of God : this only powerfully insinuates, and effectually presses his Name to the Father. When mere Nominal Christians present themselves before God in the Congregation of Believers, 'tis but as *Satan* intruded (*Job 1.*) among the Sons of God, they are of their Company, but not of their Number; neither will they find any Advantage by using *Christ's* Name. God is not to be impos'd upon, like *Isaac*, by false Pretences, by counterfeit Hands, a borrow'd Name, or Garments, but will discover the Cheat through all; and he that to the Righteous is all Ear, to the Wicked will be as an Idol, *that has Ears and hears not*; those, I say, that regard not the Words of his Commandments, nor understand the Voice of his Spirit, are to him also as *Barbarians*, as a People whose Language he understands not. Nay, and 'tis well if it fares no worse with them, than not to be understood, and that their Petitions are only answered with Silence : for God many times breaks forth in Fury and Indignation against such for their double Provocation of him, for rebelling against him, and presuming to make Addresses for his Favour. *Unto the Wicked*, says God, *What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed, &c.* ? Such as these when

when they make their Prayers, add Sacrilege to Disobedience ; and as they have corrupted themselves, they prophane the Ordinances of Religion ; and God is not only deaf to their Devotion, but angry at their Presumption. Men themselves are not patient of such an Usage, that those that injure them (be they never so much their Near Relations) should importune them for the highest Benefits. And can we imagine that God should brook the bold and impudent Sollicitations of those that Sin against him, which are his only Enemies, be they *Jews*, or be they *Christians* ? *Esse Christianum grande est, non videri*, as *S^t Jerome* says, 'tis a Blessed and Glorious Priviledge to be a Christian, but not only to be call'd one ; and they are hugely deceiv'd, as the Father goes on, that think a Good Name can profit those that do wickedly ; a fair Appellation justifie such as have foul Manners. If we will have God Kind and Propitious to us, we must be first Kind to our Selves ; if we will have his Ears open to our Prayers, we must keep our Ears open to his Commandments ; we must be Obedient, if we expect he should be Gracious ; like *David* we must search and try our Hearts, whether any Iniquity be found in us, for we may assure our Selves, where Iniquity is found, Favour will not be found. *There is no Name under Heaven given among men, whereby they can be sav'd, but that of the Lord Jesus* : But as we must not trust in a Wrong Name, so neither must we trust in the Right Name a Wrong Way ; we must not entertain Vain Confidences in our Saviour himself, hope that he will countenance any thing contrary to his Gospel : as *S^t Paul* says, *Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from Iniquity*. Which God give us Grace all to do : to whom be ascrib'd all Honour, Glory, &c.

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March 2, 1911

Dear Sir,
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst. in relation to the above matter.
The same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.
Very respectfully,
[Signature]
[Title]

The Seventeenth Sermon.

LUKE xvii. 37.

*And they said unto him, Where Lord?
And he said unto them, Whereso-
ever the Body is, thither will the
Eagles be gathered together.*

AS the Spirit of God, before the time of the Gospel, was fain to turn and winde it self, as I may say, many ways to reclaim the World from Sin: So after the Son of God came into the World to preach to it, he found it necessary to use many holy Arts to win upon it. Sometimes the Convictions of Miracles, sometimes the Invitations of Promises, sometimes the Terrours of Threats and Judgments, as in my Text, and those Judgments not only temporal, which concerned the Jewish Nation, but eternal, which concerned all Mankind.

And we that live in these Days so much nearer the

the Approach of the final Judgment prophesy'd of by our Lord, have reason to deplore the strange Contumacy which is yet seen in the World ; that the Hearts of men are still so Unalterable from their Evil Ways ; that those Engines that heretofore were so successful in oppugning Sin, should now, like antiquated Engines of War, become wholly unserviceable ; those powerful Methods of the Gospel, which could convert the Heathen World, cannot reclaim the Relaps'd and Apostate. If the Preacher does *paulo majora canere*, add Terrours to his Perswasions ; join the Voice of the Trumpet, and even of the last Trumpet, to his own Voice ; leave Christ's Sermons, and take his Prophecies for Texts, threaten Destruction to restrain Vice ; Damnation to awe Impiety ; it effects nothing : But where the Pulpit is Ominous, Men are Obstinate and Obdurate ; hear of Christ's coming in the Clouds, and their appearing before his Tribunal as unconcerned, as they hear a Poetick Fable : shew not that Fear and Amazement, however mixt with hesitancy and doubting, which the yet raw Disciples did upon their being informed of these things. *And they said unto him, Where Lord ? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the Body is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together.*

Before I proceed to explain the Words, it will be necessary to shew to what they appertain. The which that I may do, I must have recourse to the 24th Chapter of St Matthew, where the Subject, of which my Text is but a Branch, is more fully treated of, than by our Evangelist. And there we read at the third Verse, That the Disciples enquired of our Lord three things, When the Time of his Coming, the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the Temple, and the End of the World, should be ? To which, according

ording as his Custom was, he framed an Answer, not to gratifie the Curiosity of the Askers but, to reveal to the World, what was the Will of God should be revealed. For there are some future Events which the Divine Wisdom thinks fit to make known to men, the better to prepare them to receive or avoid them : Others again which it thinks fit to hide from them, not only to restrain their Curiosity, but to prevent their Trouble. Our Lord being therefore to speak of Future things, and the secret Counsels of God, as the Subject was Prophetick, he treats of them in a Prophetick, *i. e.* in a more Obscure Strain, than when he taught the Doctrines and Precepts of Life. Not that there is any imperfection in his expressing himself, or uncertainty of that which he foretold : but as *Solomon* says, *It is the Glory of God to conceal a thing, as 'tis the Honour of Kings to search out a matter.* Christ spoke sufficiently plain, what his purpose was should then be known, and what was not, he kept still under a Cloud.

However therefore there are those that undertake to say, He handles one Question precisely to such a Verse, and another to such a Verse, and the like, there are no discernible Transitions in his Discourse, but he seems purposely to involve the matter he speaks of, to treat sometimes of two Questions together, and sometimes of all three promiscuously ; uttering himself one while literally, another while allegorically. Which has caused some to conceive, that his whole Discourse has respect but to one thing : Which some will have to be the Day of Judgment : Others, to the temporal Destruction only of the Jewish Nation by the Romans, expounding the Eagles in my Text of the Roman Standards or Ensigns, and

and all the other Wonders and Prodigies that are mentioned, *The darkning of the Sun and Moon, the falling of the Stars, &c.* allegorically, of the Change that should be in the Church and State of *Israel*, parallel to the like Allegory us'd in the second of *Joel*. Some understand by the *Eagles* in my Text the Elect or Faithful ; and by the *Body* about which they shall be gathered together, the Person of Christ, to which they shall fly as to their Spiritual Food.

But it seems very strange, when the Disciples enquired of our Lord three things, and his Words comport so well to the Satisfaction of all three, that he should be thought to answer to None, or but to one of them : which yet we must say, if we admit of any of the Interpretations I have instanc't in. As therefore not only as more congruous to Reason, but to the Passages in our Lord's Discourse, we may determine, that he answers, however indistinctly, to all his Disciples Queries. And as there is no Question, but that he speaks of his Coming to destroy *Jerusalem* and his wicked Crucifiers : So there is as little doubt to be made, that he speaks also of the Destruction of the World at the last Day, and his coming to judge it. For however the Calamity of the Jews was so great, the Tragical Circumstances of the Subversion of their Nation so dismal, that it was a kind of Doomf-day to them ; and their particular Destruction may be resembled to the General Destruction of the World : Yet they that shall duely consider the formidable *Phænomena* or Appearances, the Scene of mixt Majesty and Terrour set out by St *Matthew*, must confess they are Incommunicable to any other Event, but his coming to judge the World, and the Dissolution of the visible Heaven and Earth, and can be affixt to none beside but figuratively and improperly :

perly : So that not only to accommodate, but to appropriate them to a less Accomplishment, with the exclusion of the greater, seems an Interpretation intolerable.

I shall not therefore scruple to proceed to understand the Words, as I have begun, of the last Judgment. Particularly, that by [*the Body*] in my Text, or by [*the Carcase*] as St *Matthew* has it, is meant all Persons of the World ; and by [*the Eagles*] the Angels, whose Office it shall be (as God's Apparators) to summon and bring together at the Last Day the Quick and the Dead before the Tribunal of Christ. And the End or Drift of an Emblem or Parable being chiefly to be regarded, and not the particular Words rack'd, for what Mysteries may possibly be found in them, I shall insist no longer at present to consider, what Comparisons may be brought from *Carcases and Eagles, or the like* : but observe from the General Scope of the Words these three things :

I. That at the Last Day there shall be an Exact Discrimination and Distinction between the Righteous and the Wicked.

II. That there shall be a particular Visible Place to which all men shall be brought together to Judgment.

III. That Men very hardly, or very unwillingly, believe these things.

I begin with the first of these,

That at the Last Day there shall be an Exact Discrimination made between the Righteous and the Wicked.

The Almighty and Wise God finds it not Expedient, while this World remains, continually to be giving outward and ocular Demonstrations, either of

his Approbation of the Faithful, or of his Detestation of the Wicked : the most which he does in the Course of his Providence, is sometimes to check the Madnes of the one, that they grow not insupportable ; and to encourage the Vertue of the other, that they may not be dejected : but as *Solomon* says, There is no convincing Argument from visible Occurrences of God's love or hatred to either of them. And the Unrighteous take from hence no little heart to run on in their Evil Ways, and to deride the Faithful for losing the certain pleasures of a present Life, for the uncertain Hopes of a future : they see no Difference made between themselves and the Godly in this World, and they conceive there will be as little in the next ; flatter themselves, that their Sins will either be buried with them in the Grave, and forgotten in that long Night ; or else shuffled and lost in the vast Heap of semblable Transgressions of other men. But as it is the Quality of Cold to congeal and unite together into one Lump things heterogeneous, or of divers Sorts, as Sticks, Straws, Stones, &c. and of the Thaw when it comes to dissolve the Union, and then the Stones and like heavy Bodies are precipitated, Straws and light Bodies float, and those of a middle Nature are suspended between both : So though in this World the Innocent and Guilty cohabit together, and make but one Lump or Corporation ; yet at the Dissolution of it, some Men shall be precipitated into the Bottomless Pit, and others again exalted above the Region of the Stars. Or else, as at the Creation, all things made but one *Chaos*, and appear'd to be but of one and the same Nature, till God by his Divine Power separated them, and then the Lighter flew up to the Heavens or higher Parts of the World, and the Heavier

vier settled on the Earth below : So at the End of the World, when God shall come to judge it, he will distinguish and separate the Mass of men according to the Quality of their Works, and those who have set their Hearts on heavenly things, shall be thought worthy of Heaven, and to reign for ever with him and his holy Angels in Glory ; and those who have hated heavenly things, and set their Affections on things below, corrupted themselves with the Vices of this Life, to use the Psalmists words, *shall be turn'd into Hell.*

And the revealing of this Mystery does vindicate the Justice of the Deity, and absolve Providence from the Censures and hard Speeches of men : for our Lord has plainly taught, That there shall be a Day of calling all Flesh to account for what they have done in this Life : and however the Good and Bad are promiscuously join'd at present, and seem to be every way alike, and equal to one another ; though they be in the same Field, as he says, or the same Bed, yet one shall be taken, and the other left : Again, in another place, *The hour is coming when all that are in the Graves shall come forth, those that have done Good unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* And this being asserted by the mouth of Truth it self, and also the Fundamental Part of our Creed, which sustains its whole Frame and Fabrick, it will be sufficient thus to have illustrated it without bringing any Proofs of the Matter : The Article of *Christ's judging the Quick and the Dead*, though it be last in Place in the Confession of our Faith, yet it is the first in Office and Importance, and has an Influence on all the Articles that go before it, and which would be of no Consequence without it. For what

avails it to believe *there is a God*, if neither in this Life, nor in the Life to come he will make any Difference between the Righteous and the Wicked? What profit is it to believe *a Redeemer or a Saviour*, if there be no Salvation or Damnation? That there is *a Holy Ghost*, if in the Issue it shall be all one to those that are Sanctify'd, and to those that are not Sanctify'd? The very Equity and Reason of the thing, that there should be a Day of Judgment, is a sufficient Demonstration that there shall be such a Day.

Instead therefore, I say, of bringing Proofs of this Doctrine, I shall rather advise men to make the best Use of it, and not to be deceived with the present Uniformity and Identity, as 'twere, of the Condition of the Godly and Ungodly in this World: but to reflect on what is said of the Severe Scrutiny that shall be at the Last Day, when the present Mask shall be pull'd off from the Face of the World, and no Action whatsoever be concealed; when the secret Sins, as well as secret Counsels of Princes, whatever they have done amiss, or been the Authors of others doing amiss, without regard to their Persons, shall be laid open: when the delinquencies of the Meaner Sort shall not be past over, or lost in Oblivion, by reason of the Obscurity of their Condition: When the Nice in point of Fame and Reputation, but regardless of their Innocence, shall have their Sly and close Sins ript open, and publisht to their greater Confusion before Men and Angels: When the Player and Actor in Religion, the Hypocrite, shall be stript of his Vizard and Mantle of Holiness, and the loathsome Vices concealed under them, exposed. For as 'tis said, *At the coming of Christ, Anti-Christ shall no longer deceive the Nations*: So it shall arrive,

to all those that have liv'd *Anti-Christ*s, at the coming of *Christ* to Judgment, they shall no longer deceive, however successful their Cozenages have been in this Life. The Children of Darkness are many times, to outward Appearance, clad in richer Robes of Righteousness, and make a goodlier Shew of Piety and Devotion, than the Children of Light: *But in the Day that God shall make up his Jewels*, as the Prophet *Malachi* speaks, he will distinguish the true from the false; and however the Counterfeit Vye at present in Lustre with the right and Orient, and exceed them in Magnitude, then it shall be seen what trash they are. Which if men would duely consider, and that this Tryal and Examination of all Flesh is not only to lay open their Actions to the Eye of the Judge, for alas he knew them in the hour they were committed: or yet to expose them only to Shame before the innumerable Host of Men and Angels that will be there assembled, for that is but the Beginning of the Evils they are to expect: But 'tis, that every One may receive a Reward according to his Merit, as our Lord says, *They that have done Well, Everlasting Glory, and they that have done Evil, Everlasting Fire*. I say, if men would seriously consider this, they would anticipate this Work of Tryal and Judgment while time was allowed them to do it; they would tear off their Disguises of Sin, before they were stript of them; they would distinguish and separate themselves from the Wicked by a Holy Life, before the Great Day of Separation of the Just and Unjust; prevent God's severe Sentence on their Misdeeds, by their own severe Condemnation of them before-hand; that whether they labour at the Mill, or in the Field; in the City, or in the Camp; whatever their Callings and Employments be, they may
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be of the number of those that are *taken*, and not of those that are *left*. And let this suffice to be said of my first Observation, That at the last Day there shall be an exact Discrimination between the Righteous and the Wicked. I proceed to my Second Observation,

That there shall be some particular visible Place to which all men shall be brought to Judgment.

Although it be in the Power of the Almighty, where-ever Sinners shall be found at the last Day, there to sentence and send them to Hell; and where-ever the Righteous shall be found, from thence to translate them to Heaven: Yet, as 'tis the manner of Earthly Princes, to summon their People to receive Justice at some certain Place, their chief City, where their Court and ordinary Residence are; so it seems good to the Wisdom of God, to assemble all Persons, both Just and Unjust, to one Place of Common Judicature: and Writers do most probably conceive the place shall be *Jerusalem*, the City of God's most visible Residence on Earth. And that for these two Reasons:

1. For the Reparation of *Christ's* Honour: Because he suffered there not only the Scorn and Despight of the Jews, who put him to a cruel, unjust and shameful Death, but the Affronts also of all Nations gathered together at the Feast of the Passover: it being God's will that he should receive Reparation and Amends, where he had received the greatest Outrage and Indignity: and that the Prophecy of *Zechary* should be fulfill'd in the most eminent Manner, *They shall look on him whom they pierced.*

2. For the clearer Conviction and more sensible Compunction of those that denied and murdered him.

him. For as it is the Custom again among Men, to send Malefactors to be judged and executed near the Place they committed their Crimes, the more to awaken their Guilt ; so God the more, first, to awaken, and then to confound the daring and relentless Infidelity of our Lord's Crucifiers, (who, after all their Persecutions, with'd *his Bloud might be on them and on their Children*) has determin'd to pass the Sentence of Condemnation on them in the Place they perpetrated their Crimes. And the Prophecy of *Joel*, Chap. 3. seem'd to some of the Antients to countenance this Opinion, That God will assemble all Nations to Judgment in the Valley of *Jehoshaphat*, which was near adjoining to *Jerusalem* ; says the Prophet, *Assemble your selves all ye Heathen — and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge, &c. Multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Jehoshaphat : for the Day of the Lord is near in the Valley of Decision.* Which Prophecy, whatever earlier Accomplishment it had in God's judging the Heathen that were Enemies to *Israel*, yet the Principal Completion of it has been thought to point at the last Universal Judgment. And 'tis a General Perswasion of the *Jews*, that the Tryal of all Men at the Last Day shall be at *Jerusalem* : but not understanding, That the Dead shall be gathered together by the Office and Ministry of Angels, they say, That in whatever remoter Parts of the World they dye in their Dispersion, their Bodies, by the Power of God, shall be roll'd along through the inward and secret Parts of the Earth to *Jerusalem*, the Place assigned for their Resurrection, and the Appearance of all Men.

But now after all that has been said, though we conclude not peremptorily and chorographically, Where, or over what Part of the Earth, *Christ* will
ere&

erect his Throne for Judgment, the Scriptures being silent, or very obscure as to the Place : yet there is nothing that they deliver more plainly, than that the Great Session or Assize at the End of the World shall be Conspicuous and Dreadful ; and they seem even solicitous and industrious in describing the formidable Manner of it, to make in mens minds a deeper impression of *the Terrours of the Lord*, as the Apostle calls them. And as we have two Corporal Senses, or Inlets of Fear into the Soul, the Eye and the Ear, the Word of God makes the Terrours of Dooms-Day to consist in the Objects of both these Senses, *viz.* in fearful and amazing Sounds, and in Prodigious and Ghastly Sight. For 'tis said, *That the Lord shall descend from Heaven in a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God, and the Dead shall rise, and the Sun shall become black as Sackcloth, and the Moon red as Blood, and the Stars shall fall, and the Heavens be roll'd up like a Scrole, &c.* A Picture of such Horreur which no Phancy of Man could ever have drawn, or possibly conceiv'd, if it had not first been Divinely revealed : and though we look upon this Scheme or Draught of the Lord's coming at present with little Concern, because we suppose it to be at a great Distance : yet if we would consider, that the holiest Persons of old were as dead men at the Sight only of an Angel, though coming to them in a familiar Shape, and with a gracious Message ; and that we our selves are beside our selves, but at the fancy'd Appearance of a Spectre or Ghost, or any other Supernatural Occurrent ; what must our amazement and Confusion be, when we shall behold the whole World in a Flame, the Visible Heaven and Earth passing away with tumultuous Thunders, Lightnings, and Earth-quakes ?

The Seventeenth Sermon.

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quakes? When we shall hear the Crack of the dissolving Universe, and the Groans of dying Nature? when we shall behold not only one Evil Spirit, but the whole accursed and damned Crew in their Horrour? again, when we shall behold not only one Angel, but all the Host of Heaven, and their Lord and ours sitting in the midst of them with all the annexes of Majesty and Terrour? And this dreadful Spectacle, not like one of the Visions of the old Prophets, which concerned not the Beholder himself, but others: but such as concerns the Eternal Woe or Welfare, Salvation or Damnation of every Person there present, *i. e.* of all that ever came, or shall come into the World.

When our Lord discoursed of these things to his Disciples, and of the dreadful manner of the Destruction of the Jewish Nation as a Prelude to it, they were too big for their Imaginations to conceive; or their Faith to digest: and they could not, or durst not understand him; they were in the like Astonishment the three Disciples were in at his Transfiguration, when *Peter* said, not knowing what he said, *Let us make three Tabernacles, &c.* So great, I say, was the Consternation of the Disciples at our Lord's Words, that their Reason, and Spirits were in a kind of *Deliquium*, or Swoun, as well as their Faith. *And they answered and said unto him, Where Lord?* a Question not of Curiosity, but of Terrour and Doubt. And even still to this day we find men more inclin'd to distrust what is taught of the last Judgment, than to be warn'd and edify'd by it; to think the things affirmed of it impossible, than to follow *S^t Peter's* Advice, and to consider *what manner of Persons they ought to be, seeing the World shall be dissolved.* And so I pass to my last Observation,

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The Unwillingness of Men to believe a Judgment-Day.

So weak is the Nature of man, or such is the Subtily of our Spiritual Adversary the Devil, that even when we are convinced of the Substance of many Truths, yet by reason of the Strangeness and Unconceiveableness of some Circumstances of them, we let go the very Substance of the Truths again; and the best Men have been sometimes subject to this Infirmitie. The Psalmist was thoroughly instructed in this fundamental Truth, *That there was a God that judged in the Earth*; yet because he saw the Righteous oppressed, and the Wicked in prosperiry, he stagger'd in his Faith, *and his feet*, as himself confesses, *had well-nigh slipt*. The Blessed Virgin could not but believe the Message of an Angel appearing at Noon-day, and out-shining the Brightness of the Noon-days Light: but because she was to conceive miraculously, without the knowing of a man, some Scruple remained in her holy breast of the Event of the Prediction. The *Israelites* heard from their Prophets, of whose Divine Mission they doubted not, That if they went on in their Transgressions, their Temple should be destroyed, and themselves led Captive by the Gentiles: but then the Conceit, that God would never suffer these things to be done for his own Glory, whatever their Demerits were; that if they were remov'd, he would want a People; and if his House were prophan'd, his Worship would be extinguish'd in the World; made them disbelieve their Prophets. And the like latent Incredulity posselt the Disciples here, *They knew their Lord had the Words of Truth*, but the Strangeness and Dreadfulness of the things
spoken

spoken of by him made their Faith fluctuate, and they could not believe, even what they could not disbelieve.

And when we see the holiest Men thus to have Doubts and Scruples to with-hold them from receiving a harsh and displeasing, though never so plainly a reveal'd, Truth; to have a *Where*, or a *When*, *Lord*? a *How*, or by *What Means*? Some Question or other of the Time, the Place, the Possibility, and the like? What marvel is it, if Wicked and profligate Persons, who are wholly Strangers to the Power and Wonderful Ways of God, shew a greater Infidelity, when they hear a Doctrine wholly contrary to their Temper, repugnant to their Pleasures, destructive of their Interests, and withal difficult to be conceiv'd? I say, if when such as these, to restrain them from their Lusts, or gainful Oppressions, are told, that they will certainly be call'd to a strict Account in another Life, for what they do amiss in this, smile, or laugh out, and conceive they shall do well enough after their Sins, notwithstanding all that's threatned against them? We see Malefactors against the Laws of Men, even after the Sentence of Death is past upon them, and their Execution as certain to ensue, as the revolution of the short time appointed for it; yet flatter themselves they shall find means to escape, by a Bribe, by a Rope at a Window, by a Reprieve, by a Rescue, by an Accident, by any thing, they know not what. And after the like manner Offenders against God, though their Condemnation be recorded in his Word, and their Condition more desperate, promise themselves they shall never feel the Evils denounc'd against them; that the Report of Dooms-Day is false, the Doctrine of a Resurrection and another Life foolish and impos-

fible. When therefore they hear such passages in Scripture as these, *Some mens Sins are open before-hand, going before to Judgment, and some mens follow after* : and again, *The Good Works of some are manifest before-hand, and they that are otherwise, cannot escape* : they reason in their hearts, and say, Ay, but why ? the Parties are dead. Ay, but When, and Where ? the Parties are escap'd into a far Country. Ay, but How, or which way ? the Parties are drown'd, and devour'd by Fishes, and their Bodies turn'd into Nourishment, or else burnt to Ashes, and that scatter'd — True, *but where-ever the Carcase is*, or the least Remains of it, *thither will the Eagles be gathered together, i. e.* though the Body of a Sinner seem to all humane Appearance annihilated ; yet God by his Power will restore it, and by the Office of his Angels bring it before the Tribunal of Christ.

And this is the importance of our Lord's Emblematical Words in my Text : for 'tis observed, that Eagles and other Birds of Prey, Ravens, Vulturs, &c. have a great Perspicacity in discovering their Food, a kind of divining, or Prophetick Conjecture where to seek it, insomuch that they will follow Armies, and know the unsuccessful Troops, and expect their Banquets from their Overthrow. Says *Job, The Eagle abideth on the rock — from thence she seeth her Prey, her Eyes behold afar off — and where the slain are, there is she.* And then the Celerity, strength, and rapacity of these Creatures to seize, is as great, as their Sagacity to find out. And God has more abundantly endowed the Angels with requisite Qualities to execute his Will and Commands : however therefore Vertue and Piety went out of this World without any seeming Regard, yet they are the Objects

jects of God's Love, and the particular Care and Charge of the Angels, and they shall not pass in the next without a Glorious Reward : Again, though Wickedness dy'd in Prosperity, yet it is the Object of God's Wrath and Justice, and the Quarry of the Angels, and it will be found out by them in all the Ruines of Mortality, and brought to receive its just Punishment.

And that these things are so incredible to Sinners is without all reason : For they are the only men that believe this World to be immoveable and eternal, and yet 'tis supported only by the Word or Will of God : as *Job* says, *He hangs the Earth upon nothing*, and we may say, the Heavens upon as little : But God's rewarding the Righteous, and punishing the Wicked are founded on his Justice, *i. e.* on his very Essence or Being, and can fail no more than the Deity it self. However therefore this Doctrine is disbelieved and slighted by sensual and carnal Men, it ought continually to ring and sound in the Ears of the Faithful, as *S^t Jerome* fanſy'd the last Trump did in his ; the Parable of *the Eagles and the Carcase* should frequently occur to our thoughts, to make us break off our Sins, and to keep us close to our Duty. For if any One, to encourage himself in his Sins, shall say, When I leave this World, I shall creep again into the Cells of Darkness and Obscurity, where I lay before I was born, I shall be reduc'd again to the State of Nothing, as when I was in my first Causes : Let him consider, that God can call him out of that Nothing which he speaks of, as he did when he first made him a living Man ; and that Restoration is not so hard a Work, as Creation ; that what the Psalmist says of the Nocturnal Darkness, caus'd by the absence of the Sun, *The Darkness is no Darkness to thee,*

thee, may be affirmed of the Philosophical Darkneſs of his Diſſolution, *That Darkneſs is alſo no Darkneſs to him*; the Night and the Day of his Being or Not-being are alike in his all-ſeeing Eyes. The fat and grown Deer ſeems Subtil to himſelf in retiring into the Coverts and Thickets, and leaving the Younger and ſmaller to feed abroad in danger of the Huntſmen; but alas 'tis for him alone that all the Queſt and Search is made, and while the lean and Raſcal-Herd are paſt by, the Keeper only marks and lodges him for the Chace. The Policies of Wicked Men are as Simple as the Craft of theſe Silly Creatures, who when they are grown fat with the Oppreſſions and Spoils of their Brethren, ſwollen and ready to burſt with Exceſs and Luxury, flatter themſelves, if they can but eſcape the Penalty of the Laws, and get into their Graves in Peace, no Vengeance can afterwards overtake them: But alas it is to rouse them chiefly that Doomſ-Day is appointed, *Aquila non capit Muſcas*, the heavenly Eagles, the Angels, ſtoop not at Flies; they are not Small Sinners, but theſe Monſters and Prodigies of Impiety which are their principal Game or Quarry. As therefore the bloody Tyrant *Sylla* found it a fooliſh Meditation, after his butchering ſo many of the *Roman* Nobility, to lay down his Power, and to hope for Safety in a Retirement from the Swords of thoſe whoſe Relations he had murdered: So let no Man after a Wicked Life hope to find a Place ſo remote, obſcure, or fortify'd, as to protect him from God's Vengeance. 'Tis ſaid, *That Kings have long arms*, and can reach Delinquents at a great Diſtance; but *the King of Kings* has much longer: and if the Offenders againſt him could take Refuge even in the Centre of the Earth, obtain of the Rocks to ſhelter them, or the Mountains

tains to fall upon them, the Angels would fetch them from thence to Judgment. There are none that shall escape, none that shall be dispens'd with from appearing before the Tribunal of God, and receiving their Doom at the Last Day : Only it is now in our power, while we are yet in this Life, to make it a happy or unhappy Doom ; a Doom that adjudges us to Crowns and Scepters, or to Chains and Everlasting Torments. Repentance and a Holy Life will turn that Day of Terrour into a Day of Rejoicing ; make the Ominous Portents, the dreadful Thunders, and other amazing Concomitants of it, but as the loud Musick, cheerful Acclamations, and Solemnities which attend a Triumph or Coronation ; I say, which attend our own Triumph and Coronation, as *S^t Paul* assures us, *2 Tim. 4. 8. I have finisht my Course, says he, I have kept the Faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearance.* However the Predictions of the Last Day cause Consternation and Distraction of Mind in Wicked Doers, to the Righteous they are altogether Gospel or Good Tidings ; they that keep God's Laws, cannot chuse but love and delight in his Appearance. *Let the Heavens rejoice, and the Earth be glad, says the Psalmist : Let the Field be joyful, and all that is therein before the Lord —* And why all this Joy ? *For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the World, and the People with Equity.* And *Luke 21. 28. says our Lord, When these things come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads : for your Redemption draweth nigh.*

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, &c.

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I P E T E R i v. 8.

And above all things have fervent Charity among your selves : for Charity covereth the multitude of Sins.

THE Commandment of Charity, if we look to the Birth and Cradle of it, is as ancient as *Adam*: for this Natural Law, *Deal so with others, as you would have them deal with you*, which is the radical and original Precept out of which this Gospel one did immediately issue, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, sprung-up with Nature, and is as old as it; mutual Love beginning with mutual Society; and affection to one another being exercised, as soon as there was a Pair in the World to keep it up. But the Practice of the Jews in our Saviour's time much thwarted this Precept, *Seet* was against *Seet*, the Pharisee against the Sadducee, and the Sadducee against the Pharisee, and both against Christ;

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Professions

Professions and Offices were made Crimes, Publicans, the Receivers of Tribute, were counted Sinners: again, Revenge was held as lawful as Punishment; Extrajudicial Righting of a man's self, as Judicial Censures; *Do Good to those that do Good to you, and Evil to those that do Evil*, was good Ethicks among them, and the Moral Man esteem'd to appear as eminent in practising the last part of this Maxime, as the first. So that the Precept of Charity was, in a manner, wholly extinguish'd among them, so overwhelmed with the Rubbish of ill Customs, and worse Traditions, that to clear it and make it shine out again, was a Work as hard, as to introduce something that never before was: Which caus'd our Lord to call this Commandment a *New one*, *I give you a New Commandment*, says he, *That ye love one another*. New, not as if it then first entred the World, but because it was then renew'd to them: as things redeem'd from the injury of Age and Oblivion appear fresh and new, when they are brought into Use and Fashion again.

But we may admire, that the World has so much agreed in all Times to abrogate this Law, brought in at first by General Interest, and of so Universal Benefit, that we may say with *Tully*, *Non aqua, non igne, non aëre, pluribus locis utimur, quàm amicitia*, we stand not more in need of water, fire, or air in every turn of our Lives, than of Friendship, or the mutual Offices of Love. And if this Law were entertained, it would render all other Laws useles, it would disannul the Commandments, by fulfilling them; it would remove heaps of Legal Cautions and Provisions, the two Tables would be no more necessary to Men, than to Angels; private Grudges, open Wars, Rebellions, Factions, Schisms, would all vanish,

nish, every Person would be not only more holy in himself, but would cause others to be more holy ; many Sins would be amended by a fair Example, many would be extenuated by a candid Interpretation, many overcome by a kind and amicable Usage : Therefore, as the Apostle advises in the foregoing Verses, mortifie your Lusts, be sober and watch unto Prayer, neglect not necessary Duty. *But above all things have fervent Charity among your selves : for Charity shall cover the multitude of Sins.* In the Words we may observe these four things :

I. The Habit or Grace that is enjoin'd, *Love*. Not that Passion which is born with all Sensitive Creatures, and is common to Men and Beasts, but that Theological Vertue which is infus'd into Man only ; 'tis not simply Love, but Christian and Brotherly Love, *Have Charity*.

II. The Degree of this Habit, the Intenseness of this Divine Quality, and that is *Fervency* ; it is not enough to have a remiss lukewarm Charity, it must burn and glow in us, *Have fervent Charity*.

III. The Object of this Vertue, that which bounds and terminates it, and is adequately commensurate to it ; and that is, All Men in general, the Object is as large as Humane Nature, our Charity is not to be ty'd to Families or Tribes, to Sects or Nations, or whatever Partitions else Policy or Passion have made use of to distinguish and estrange men from one another : but it is to be extended to all, not to this or that Man, but to Mankind ; as 'tis indefinitely express'd in my Text, *Among your selves*.

IV. The Inforcement of the Practice of this Quality, and that is by the Recommendation of it from its Operation or Effect, it *covers Sins* : together with the Extent of that Effect, not one or two, but many

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and many Sins, *For Charity shall cover the Multitude of Sins.*

I begin first with the Habit or Vertue it self, contain'd in these Words,

Have Charity.

The Charity or Love here enjoined us, is not, I say, that melting Passion that is common to Men and Beasts, an affection awaken'd in us by the beholding of outward Beauty, the comely Structure of the Body, or other Graces of a fair and amiable Person, which is the Child only of an abused Fancy, begot through Weakness, and nurs'd up by fond Conversation, Musick, Feasts, Comedies, and other the like Genial Sports, and busie Idlenesses of the times, and produces no better Effects than Folly, dissolute Manners, Jealousie, discontent, Madness, &c. This Frenzy has obtain'd too much in being the glorified Theme of Poets and Romance-Writers, who advance it above all other Concerns of Man's Life, whether Secular or Sacred : and while they make it the admired Subject of many Fables, and the ambitious Pursuit and highest Ornament of their counterfeit Heroes, the gilded Poyson is often swallow'd by the more Sober and Vertuous. Our Apostle is so far from recommending, or in the least degree countenancing of this Dotage, that *ver. 3.* he ranks it among the detestable practices of the Heathen, and such things as Christians ought to be asham'd of: For this Sensual Love in those days was not only an Immorality or Vice, but a prime Branch of Idolatry; from hence flew all the *Cupids*, from hence came the Temples dedicated to *Venus*, the Divinity of Beauty, and the Deities of Women. And happy it were
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if we could say, These were not Idols still in the World: for if, as St *Jerome* says, every reigning Lust is an Idol set up in our hearts, Sensual Love is no inferior Deity; *Quotcunque habemus Vitia*, says the Father, *quotcunque peccata*, *tot recentes habemus Deos*; *iratus sum*, *ira mihi Deus est*; *vidi Mulierem & concupivi*, *Libido mihi Deus est*; as many Vices we have, as many Sins, so many Gods we have; I am angry, Anger is a God to me; I see a Woman and lust, my Lust again 's a God to me. And the Reason of this is plain: Because none of these things can be in us, but they must be before God in us: for if they can come after God, they can agree with and be reconcil'd to God, which is impossible; and then being before or above him, can we say less of them, than *that they are Gods in us*? 'Tis not the Temple or the Image that constitutes the Idolatry, but the Shrine the Idol has in our hearts, the Adoration and Sacrifice paid to it by our Affections: Neither does God require of us a higher Acknowledgment, than to love him with all our Heart and with all our Mind. The *Love* therefore recommended here by the Apostle, cannot be any thing that is an Enemy to God, to Man, or to our Selves: Charity or Love carries something Pious and Beneficial in its very Name, and if these things be not in the Nature of it, 'tis a Spurious or Bastard Love.

To come then to the *Love* recommended by the Apostle, we define it to be A Divine Vertue or Supernatural Grace inspired into us by God's Holy Spirit, a Quality which resides in himself, and which is subject to no perturbation: an Image of it we see in the pious Love of Parents and Children, the religious Amity between Brethren, Friends, and Neighbours, and the Perfection of it in our Saviour, his A-

postles,

postles, Martyrs, and other Christian Heroes, that follow'd his Example. An Affection it is, but a Severe and Sober one; a Fire that warms the hearts of men, but a pure and sanctify'd one, lifted far above the Softnesses and Wantonnesses of the other Carnal heat, and not kindled by the Deception of the Outward Senses, or flaming from the Fewel of a bright Beauty, but a reflected Beam of our Love to God descending downwards, and glancing on our Brethren, from a Sense of God's Goodness to us, and in obedience to that Commandment of his, that enjoins us to pay to men, as his Proxies and Substitutes on Earth, the Tolls and Tributes due unto himself. So that 'tis not This or That Person that this Love makes court to, but to Mankind; its Addressees are as Universal as the Image of God in the World, no more regard is had by it of the Handsome, than the Deformed; of the Young, than the Aged; or if more be had of the one than the other, 'tis of the Party most to be compassioned; the Object of this Love is Want or Misery in any kind, and whoever it can help is its *Amata* or Beloved.

And as the Object of this Love is no less General than the Distresses of Humane Nature, so its Expressions towards them are as many and various as there are Ways of doing Good, and being Beneficial in any kind. For Charity is not only a Largess of Money, or a Dole of Bread, a feeding of the hungry, and a cloathing the naked, &c. but a parting with our Passions for the sake of our Brethren, a condescending to their Weakness, a complying with their Temper, and tolerating their Infirmities: 'Tis again, a relieving them with Good Counsel, a Donative of Seasonable Admonition and Reproof; a shewing of Severity, when need requires, as well as Mercy; an Ex-
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acting of Punishment, as well as a remitting of it : for Charity is not that which is always grateful and always pleasing, but which is ever salutary and ever beneficial. The Wanton Love we condemned, is a constant Floud of Sweetness, which flows smoothly into the Ocean of Destruction, a smiling Evil that knows nothing harsh or disagreeable, till it turns all to Harshness and Disagreeableness : But Godly Love is often bitter in the first Taste, and sweet in the after Relish, a rugged Mercy and an Austere Kindness, a Good transferr'd with Frowns and Severe Discipline : and such are the Corrections of Servants and Children, the Correptions of Friends, the Excommunications of the Church, and the exterminating Sentences of the Law ; the Rod and the Stocks, the Hurdle and the Axe, being as instrumental unto Charity, as Money, Food, Raiment, and the like. *Open Rebuke, says Solomon, is better than secret Love :* and I may say, Open Rebuke has in it much secret Love. And to think the Remissness of Laws, charitable ; and the Execution of them, cruel ; is a Shortness of Reasoning, which becomes only Women and Children, who pity the present Sufferings of the Criminal, but see not the future Good purchased by it. The timely cutting off of a Notorious Malefactor has rescued a Nation from Destruction, *Phineas stood up and pray'd, and the Plague ceas'd :* his seasonable Execution of two Eminent Offenders preserved the lives of many thousands of the people ; and holy Writ calls not his Fact, Slaughter, but styles it by the milder Name of *Prayer* : because it invoked God's Mercy, and propitiated his Wrath. If Pity may bind the hands of Justice, and Charity protect Violence and Outrage, not only one Wolf will worry a whole Flock, but the Flock or Body of People

People will in time become Wolves and Tygers: for Religion only perswades men to be Just and Righteous, it does not constrain them to be so; indeed it promises Rewards to Well-doers, and threatens Judgment to Evil-doers, but they are Rewards to come, and Judgments at a great distance, and the Sinner has leave to execute his Wickedness; so that the Terrours of Religion work only upon the Good and Faithful, while the Worst and most of men despise them. But even the boldest and most daring in their Impiety, who count Heaven and Hell only the Parables of Scripture, and the Fictions of Preachers, will boggle in the Carriere of their Sins at the remembrance of a severe Judge and an unrelenting Humane Law, and consider whether they can escape, if they commit them; and will not run on madly to transgress, when they see nothing is to be had but Vengeance; the Attempt, and their Miscarriage; their Sin, and their certain Death.

Thus we see Severity is not contrary to the Rules of Charity, the Sword in the hand of Justice less instrumental to mens Good, than the Scales; that the fear of Punishment is a kind of Grace and Principle of Obedience in the Hearts of Wicked men, which restrains them from Vice, even when it wins them not to the Part of Vertue. But then though Severity and Punishment are Noble and necessary Branches of Charity, they are not the Natural and Genuine; they relate to it, but as the Prophet *Isaiah* says they do to God, *They are his Works, his strange Works; his Acts, his strange Acts.* The Works which Charity delights most in, are those that are mild and gentle; which not only produce Good, but which in themselves are Good; which shew Mercy by the Ways of Mercy, and are no less beneficial in their

their Progress, than their End : And these are the Operations of Charity which our Apostle chiefly recommends here to us : and that we may not erre in so Divine a Grace, or come short in so important a Duty, our best way will be to set before us the Perfectest Exemplar of it that ever was, our Lord and Saviour, and himself commands us, *John 15. 12.* to do this. *As I have lov'd you,* says he, *so love one another :* thus making his Love to us the Rule or Pattern of our Affection to those of our own Kind.

And the first Instance of Christ's Love, which I shall propose for Imitation, is this, That as he lov'd us, Before we lov'd him ; lov'd us, without any Merit or Invitation on our part ; lov'd us, when we could not love him, when we were wholly benumm'd and dead to all heavenly Affections : So likewise that we love one another, expect not Obligations and Invitations from our Brethren, to quicken our Charity towards them ; but rather delight to begin and be before-hand in our Expressions of Kindness, and to have it seen that they come from our selves. A natural Spring flows of its own Impulse, unbid, unprovoked, and makes its Way through all Oppositions : if it meets a hollow in its Course, it fills it up ; if a light Obstacle, it bears it away with its Stream ; if a great one, it swells and passes over it, at least pours out still its free Source, till it finds, or makes a Passage. And thus our Charity must take its Rise, and flow from its self, shew it depends on nought beside, that it cannot be obstructed by the want of any Qualifications, or yet by any Disobligations of our Brethren. *Atticus* the charitable Bishop of *Constantinople*, when he sent Money to relieve the Poor in the City of *Nice*, commanded that no enquiry should be made in the Distribution of it, of what Sect in Religion

ligion the Poor were, but what their Wants were. He that confers his Benefits upon Consideration only of mens agreeing with him in Opinion, of their Merit, Neighbourhood, former Obligations, or the like, may be just, prudent, or Grateful, but he cannot be said to be Charitable: for this is a free, unbiass'd, disinterested Vertue, and if it regards ought in the Good it does, beside the Opportunity and Power it has to do it, it changes its Nature, becomes another thing, and assumes a New Name. Let no man therefore think he has absolved the Duty of Charity, if he be Kind only where his Honour is courted and comply'd with; ready to entertain Friendship, when he is sought to; to be reconcil'd, when full Amends is made him: But if he will shew this Grace, he must first break the Ice, and lead the way to Concord, Kindness, and Beneficence. And none think this so hard a Saying, as those who would hugely stomach and disdain, in case their Neighbour should precede or take place of them upon any Meeting or Encounter: as if it were Disparagement to them to sit lower than another at the Table, and not to be below him in Vertue; to go after him at a Door, and not to come behind him in all Goodness. If we cannot part with our Passions and Evil Affections for the sake of our Brethren, as well as our Money; forgo our Pride and Animosities, as well as our Goods; we are Charitable but in part, Merciful but in a Case; and possibly the Vertue may not be only Imperfect and lame in us, but we may be wholly destitute of it: for *S^t Paul says, We may bestow all our Goods to feed the Poor, give our Bodies to be burnt, and yet not have the Grace of Charity*: Because these things may be done out of Ostentation, and not only so, but without any Profit or Benefit: For put the Case,

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Case, our Brother be not low in Fortune, but weak of Understanding; not indigent of outward things, but of Instruction and Advice; stands in need to be born with, not to be reliev'd; what Good will our Money do him in these his Infirmities? It were as reasonable to apply it to a broken Arm, or fester'd Wound, to give it to one starving in a Desert where no Food is to be bought. If we will be Charitable, we must compassionate our Brothers Necessities, of what Nature soever they be; supply his Wants, not gratifie our own Temper.

The second Instance of Christ's Love which I recommend to our Imitation, is this, That as he lov'd us not only first and before we lov'd him, but lov'd us when we were Enemies to him; when we were not only Strangers, but Rebels to Heaven; when we exercised all the acts of hatred and hostility against it: So that we love one another, and not think the Obliging and Good Natur'd only worthy of our Kindness, but the Discourteous and Injurious. Some men are contentious with their Neighbours, outrageous to their Children, tyrannical to their Inferiors, insupportable to their Equals, irreconcilable to their Enemies, implacable upon every Colour of a Wrong: But the Charitable on the other side can Excuse and pardon the most design'd and study'd Injuries, see something to commiserate and pity even in mens Injustice; can look upon their Malice, as their Mistake or Misfortune, pray for their Enemies, as our Lord did, in the very Article of the Death which they have brought upon them, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* And if we consider rightly, Sinners are Ignorant and Mistaken in what they do, Fools, as the Scripture constantly terms them: for no man can will a Wrong Action, that is not Ignorant

and Mistaken ; and whether the Mistake lye in the thing Chosen , or in the Principle by which 'tis chosen, it matters not, if it be still a Mistake ; and the grosser the Errour is, the more pitiable still it is : and if we can pardon Fools and Mad Folks, Children and Sick persons, and cannot likewise commiserate the Sick in Sin, the Mad and Foolish in Wickedness, we are as blind in our Anger, as they are in their Actions. How will that man stand before the Severe Tribunal of God, who weighs every Grain and Scruple in his Brothers Trespasses against him ? who shews the exactest and highest Rigour of Justice in his Revenges, and perhaps was never just in any other passage of his Life ? how will he be able to excuse his non-payment of the vast Arrears he is indebted to God, who has exacted the utmost Farthing of his Brother ? Beloved, we make our Condition in the World to come, according to our Charitableness or Uncharitableness in this ; God will love us, or hate us ; judge us, or justifie us ; enlarge his Mercy, or shut it up to us ; as we do these things to others : if we be difficult in remitting our Brothers Faults, he will be difficult in remitting ours ; if we forgive only small Offences , he will not pardon our Great ; if we forgive only in part, we shall not be absolv'd in the whole. *He shall have Judgment without Mercy,* as St James says, *that shew'd no Mercy.* Let no man therefore seek an Excuse, or be glad when he has found a Distinction to take him off from pardoning his Brother : for what profit is there in that Wrath which does but treasure up Wrath against the Day of Wrath ? The Fourth Council of *Carthage* forbade, that the Oblations of Contentious Persons should be received into the Treasury of the Church , for the same reason that the High Priest refus'd to put the money

money return'd by Judas into the Treasury of the Temple, *because it was the Price of Blood.* So this the Council: *Obligaciones dissidentium Fratrum neque in Sacratio, neque in Gazophylacio Episcopi recipiant.* As there is no place in the Church of God for Uncharitableness, so we may be sure there's as little in the Kingdom of Heaven.

I have not time to set forth all the Instances of *Christ's Love*: but there is One which I must not omit, and 'tis that which differences and distinguishes Spiritual Love from Worldly and Carnal above all others: and that is *Christ's performing all he did, merely for their Sakes for whom he did it.* Carnal Love, or Dotage on outward Beauty, can in a measure imitate the former things we have mentioned, love first, before it be beloved; love without Merit in the Person affected, digest all their Peevishness and Affronts, and hang on still, and leave no means unattempted to bring their Mind about: but then they do this not for their sakes, but their own, to attain the Fruition of what they have so much desired. But, Alas! what End, what Design could the Creator of all things have on his own Creatures? What Advantage could he receive by them? As Christ therefore lov'd us not for his own Good, but ours; as it was our Salvation, our re-estating in Immortality that he intended, and not his own: so in our Love to our Brethren we must not have an Eye to any Sordid Profit of our own; we must not chaffer Kindness, huckster, as I may say, friendly Offices; Charity requires the mind of a Prince, not of a Merchant; and we must make a difference between Christianity, and Factoring. *As I have loved you, so love one another.* If it be here objected, That the most Spiritual and Divine Love was never so abstracted,

tracted, as to be without all Intuition of Reward, and that our Lord himself, for the joy that was set before him, endur'd the Cross and despised the Shame: It will be enough to say in answer, That as in a Kingdom or Commonwealth they are accounted Disinterested Persons and without all Designs, who pursue only the Publick Interest and Honourable Designs: So in the Kingdom of the Gospel those are counted to love without all Design, who have no base and bye Design; who love God and their Neighbour for Heavens sake, are interpreted to love them purely for their Own sakes. And let this suffice to be said of the *Habit or Grace of Love* enjoined by the Apostle: I proceed next to speak of the *Degree* of it.

Have Fervent Charity.

The Word in the Original for Fervent *ἐκτενῶς*, signifies as well the Continuation of Time, as the Vehemence and Intenseness of the Quality; the Constancy that should be in our Love, as well as the Ardour. I shall therefore handle it according to both Senses.

1. In regard of the Time or Constancy of this Quality, our Charity must not be Fantastick, interrupted, and uncertain; there must not be several Weathers in our Affections; they must not change like the Winds, but move like the Heavens in one constant Circumvolution shedding and dispensing their favourable Influences. For he that loves not always, when he does love, loves out of Humour, not Vertue; and we may account all the good Offices he does, only the Fits and Starts of some momentary Passion, and not the Actions of a settled and radicated Habit. Again, this Vertue must not be taken
up

up only at the Alarm of a Danger or Sickness, at the approach of a Holy Season, or by way of Preparation to the Communion: for they are far from fulfilling the Law of Charity that lay down their Grudges and Quarrels to their Brethren out of some Affright or Design, but as soon as these are over, reassume them again; imitating the Serpent that casts up her Poyson, when she goes into the Water, and as soon as she comes on dry Land licks it up again. God accepts not those kind of Truces, where Battel ceases, but the hatred does not; where the Weapons rest, but the Affections still rage. Though Charity ought to flourish more eminently at holy Seasons, yet it must live and be exercised all the whole Year. Our Saviour's Example will direct us here in the *Continuation* of our Love, as formerly it did for the *Manner* of it; of whom we read, *That having loved his own which were in the World, he lov'd them unto the End.*

2. In regard of its *Degree*, our Charity must be Vehement and Intense, it must confess its Part in its Ardour, the Holy Ghost; which is call'd *the Spirit of Love*, and has appeared oftener to the World in Fire, than under any other Form: Good will without Fervency, is but the Endeavour of an imperfect Elementary Charity. That we may know therefore the Just Degree, and certain Temper that is required in our Love, the best means will be to bring it to the Test and Tryal of the Rule which is given us to measure it by, which is, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy Self.* And this Commandment makes our Love to our own Selves the Pattern or Standard of that which we ought to bear to other Men: Not that we are obliged to love other men every way Equal to our selves, that is not the meaning of the Rule, it implies not an *Equality*, but a *Similitude*; not a Parity,

Parity, but a Resemblance of it in Truth and Reality : Our Love must be as Sincere and Cordial to our Brethren, as to our Selves ; we must heat our Affections in the same Forge, have the like Zeal, the like Promptness to snatch all Occasions to advance their temporal and spiritual Good, as we would to advance our own : but yet still other mens Concerns ought to be but our second Care ; before we preach to others, before we labour for their Salvation, we must take heed with *S^t Paul*, that we our selves be not Cast-aways.

I shall not need in these days, in which Self-Love so much abounds, and Christian Love so little, to give Cautions against Supererogating and overflowing Charity : but though little will need to be said against any Excess in this Grace, yet much may be behoof-ful to prevent the Mistakes of it. For many think that for Friendship-sake they are obliged to engage in all manner of Wickedness, to drink Drunk, and fight Duels, to spend the main of their Life in Gaming, and other dissolute Courses ; nay, to enter into treasonable Practices against their Prince and Country. And there are those again that will debauch as highly in matters of Religion : out of their Kindness to a Sect, dip their hands in Bloud, and put a Nation into a Flame and Combustion ; for their Love to an ill-taken-up Opinion, and a Party they have long adhered to, renounce the Church and Truth, which in effect is God himself ; chuse rather to live and dye in Disobedience and a damnable Schism, than seem to be inconstant ; and to carry their Flocks along with them in the way of Perdition, than undeceive and grieve them with an Unwelcome, though Necessary Truth. Such as these are not tender of their Brethrens Peace, but guilty of their

their Destruction; and set not so high a Price on their Contentment, as a cheap on their own Consciences: 'tis not possible to be Wicked, and Charitable; to love men, and sooth them in their Sins. What S^t Paul says of the false Teachers among the Galatians, is true of these, *They zealously affect you, but not well; yea they would exclude you, that you might affect them; i. e.* they had rather their Congregations should miss of Salvation, than they lose the Interest they have in them. There may be some Extraordinary Cases in which we ought to prefer our Neighbours Good before our own: as their greater Good before our lesser; their Spiritual before our Temporal, &c. But the Rule holds in General, I am not to destroy my self out of Courtesie; I am not to contract Guilt, to preserve another Innocent; I must love my Neighbour As my self, not Above, not Before my self.

But this Doctrine seems to be oppos'd by the Practice of the two greatest Guides of the Jewish and Christian Church, Moses and S^t Paul. The one, *Exod. 32. 31.* when the Israelites had so heinously transgress'd in the Golden Calf, interceded for them in this manner, *This people have sinn'd a great Sin, they have made them Gods of Gold: yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their Sin; if not, blot me (I pray thee) out of the Book which thou hast written.* And the other, *Rom. 9. 7.* out of his heat of Zeal for the Salvation of the same Seed of Abraham, utters these words, *I could wish my self Accursed from Christ for my Brethren.* And both these seem to prefer not only the Temporal, but Spiritual Good of others, before their own: insomuch as to salve their Excess of Charity, some have thought nothing less sufficient, than to say, There are many things done in Scripture by Persons

acted by an Extraordinary and Heroick Spirit, which are not to be brought into Practice by us, who are mov'd by lower Degrees of the Spirit; and though we may admire them, we must not imitate them. Others again, on the other side, have as much depress'd the transcendent Charity of these Great Persons, by paralleling what they did with like Usages and Customs common among the Jews: For, first, they resemble *Moses's* Intercession for the people, to a friendly Complement or Expression of Good-Will familiarly used by those of the Circumcision, and possibly first taken up in imitation of *Moses's* intercession, *May I be thy Propitiation or Expiation, my Brother; i. e. may I undergo the Penalty of the Law in thy Stead; to rescue thee from the Divine Displeasure, bear thy temporal Punishment?* And after the like manner they parallel *S^t Paul's* words, (*I could wish myself Accursed from Christ*) to a like Passage found in *Ignatius*, who was an Auditor of the Apostles, *Let the Punishment of the Devil come upon me, only let me obtain Christ. Where the Punishment of the Devil cannot possibly import the Eternal Torments of Hell, for from thence there is no Redemption, or returning to enjoy Christ: and therefore it must point at Excommunication, to the giving up to Satan, and the Punishments he had power to inflict on the Excommunicated, so frequently mentioned in Scripture, but I shall need to give only one instance of. Deliver such an one unto Satan for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus,* 1 Cor. 5. 5.

But there seems here to be no need of these Extraordinary Salvo's, these, however ingenious and learned, Accommodations. For put the Case we should take the Words of *Moses* in the strictest literal Sense they

they can bear, (and we must take them so, if we will take them, as God's Answer shews he took them, *Whosoever has sinn'd against me*, says he, *him will I blot out of my Book*) what would be the Danger or Inconvenience? What did his Intercession import more, than may be thus fairly paraphrased? Lord, let me prevail with thee to revoke thy Sentence of totally destroying this People thou hast done such wonderful things for, or involve me in their Destruction, which is easier for me to bear, than to survive so great a Calamity, and to hear the Heathen insult and blaspheme thy Name on this Occasion. But *Moses's* words relate to an Eternal blotting out. Not necessarily, no nor probably: for whatever knowledge he might have of another Life, the less 'tis to be supposed, that he should be willing to undergo an Eternal Death, to save the People only from a Temporal. And as fair an account may be given of *St Paul's* words, who does not say, I do, but *I could wish my self accursed from Christ for my Brethren*. So that his words are not an anathematizing or devoting himself, but only a Meditation: as if he had said, I could in my Imagination be contented, upon the Condition or Contemplation of an Event so much to God's Glory and the salvation of so many Millions, as the bringing in the body of the Jewish Nation to the Faith of Christ, to whom the Promise was principally made, to be separated or excluded my self from him: as *Vatablus* excellently expounds, *Unus pro tam multis optarim perire, si liceat*, I could wish, as far as 'tis lawful for me, that One rather than so many might perish. And there is nothing in either of these Passages of *Moses* or *St Paul*, which every faithful Pastor may not safely imitate; let their Zeal be as much in Earnest, and as right plac'd as theirs, and it will not only be pardonable, but rewardable:

The Eighteenth Sermon.

Neither is there any thing in their Practice, if rightly weighed, contrary to this Rule, *I must love my Neighbour As my self, not Above, not Before my self.* I should proceed to the Object of our Charity, but what remains will be sufficient for another Task.

The

The Nineteenth Sermon.

I PETER iv. 8.

And above all things have fervent Charity among your selves : for Charity covereth the multitude of Sins.

The Object of Charity, All Men in General.

GOD taught the Church of the Jews in the beginning by easie and natural Notices and Instructions, by a kind of hieroglyphical or symbolical Divinity, the Scene of their Religion lay in Garments, Diet, Washes, and the like; the Commandment was conversant in the Objects of the Senses, *touch not, taste not, handle not.* And thus men were inur'd to the Ways of Vertue, and held at a Distance from Vice, by allowing or disallowing them the Use of such Creatures and Customs, as shew'd the Beauty of the one, and the Deformity of the other. God endeavouring to render Sensuality and Prophaneness odious,

odious, by rendring Dogs and Swine so; Hypocrisie and Corruption of Doctrine, by forbidding Garments of mixt matters, and sowing the Field with Seeds of several kinds; Exorbitant Lust, by amputation of the Fore-skin; Idolatry and Unnatural Mixtures, by commanding a perpetual War with the seven Nations of *Palestine*, deeply ingulph'd in these Sins. Again, he endeavoured to train them in Purity and Innocence of Life, by enjoining frequent Washings of themselves, their Garments and their Vessels: But the Jews perverted and defeated the Counsel of God in this method of instructing them, *they lookt not*, as 'tis said of them, *to the bottom of their Lavatories*, to the Design and Signification of their Types; they cleans'd their Pots and Skins, and polluted their Lives; they entertain'd the forbidden Sin, and terminated their Hatred in the innocent Sign; wallow'd in the Sensuality of Beasts, and detested the harmless Creatures; practis'd all the Abominations of the Heathen, and when they were as guilty as they, lookt upon them as their Enemies: As if God had taught them, not to hate Idolatry, but Men; not to be at Variance with Sin, but to keep up a Feud with the greatest part of the Creation. When they were enjoined utterly to root out the Canaanites, that their Corruptions might not spread among them, they made Marriages with them, and incorporated them into one People with themselves: and again, when in after Ages the reason of such Enmity was worn out, and the Danger of their Community Outdated; when their Aversion to the Gentiles did not Secure their Religion, but render it Odious; and preserved not the Truth, but hindred the Propagation of it; then most preposterously and unreasonably they shew'd an irreconcilable Hatred to the Heathen,

Heathen, and extended their Malice not only to the seven Nations, but to all Nations beside themselves, and were detestable to all the Inhabitants of the Earth for their Churlishness and Inhumanity.

In this Condition of hating, and being hated, our Lord found them when he came into the World; and when he set himself to reform their Mistakes, to remove the Outward Ordinances they had so little profited by, and to reveal the Duties that were shadowed under them, they abhorred the Sanctity of their Meaning, prefer'd the Burden of them before the Vertue they signified; embraced closer and more strictly their beggarly Elements; like degenerate Children that fly from their Book to the Bables of their Infancy; from their Tutors to their Nurses; chusing rather to counterfeit still an imperfect clipt Speech, than to form their Tongue to pronounce Words of Instruction and Knowledge. And it cost our Saviour the Cross, and his Disciples Persecutions and cruel Deaths, while they laboured to wean them from their first Childish Rudiments; to redeem the Creatures from those Prejudices which for a time were thrown upon them for Religion and Instruction sake; to bring the anathematiz'd and excommunicated World into the Pale of the Church; to have all men seen to be of one Kindred, as they were at the Creation; to revive the Consanguinity of Nature, by the Alliance of Grace; which acknowledges its scattered and remotest Relations, though situate in the furthest Climes, and made not only Strangers, but Enemies by distant Countries, and more distant Religions and Interests.

However therefore the Jews were born to Animosities and Hatreds, had Quarrels intail'd on them like their Lands, had so many Nations made over to them.

them their hereditary, legal, and commanded Enemies: yet Christians are allow'd to account no Sort of People their Enemies, but are enjoined to bear an Amicable friendly Disposition to all men; or taught that their Brethren are not those only of the same Kindred or Nation, but those of the same Kind and the same Nature: as *Tertullian* says, *Lex vetus amorem docet in proximos, nova in extraneos*; the Old Law taught us to love our Neighbours, but the New teaches us that all the World are our Neighbours; not only those that live near us, but those that do any way stand in need of our Assistance; not those alone that we know, but those whose Distresses we are acquainted with, though their Persons are Strangers to us. And this Doctrine our Lord revealed or explained in the Parable of the wounded *Samaritan*: and according to the Tenour of it, we ought to say with *Gregory Nazianzen*, *All the Earth is my Country, and no Part of the Earth is my Country, 'tis Heaven alone that can claim that Title; and no man ought to be excluded my Kindness, till I know him to be excluded Heaven; and no man but may challenge my Love, of whom I can say, Behold an Other Man.* And this Point of Christianity is so grounded on the Principles of Nature, that the better Heathens discerned and practised it: As *I am Antoninus*, says that excellent Emperour, *my Country and City are Rome and Italy: but as I am a Man, the whole World.* And like again to this is that Speech in the Comœdian, *Homo sum, humani nihil à me alienum puto*; I am a Man, and I esteem nothing humane strange to me, or not to be my Concern.

Be then my Brother an Arabian or Indian, though he has travelled far, and planted himself in a remote Clime, though he be fed with Fruits of the Earth I never

never saw, and speaks a Language I never heard, he ceases not to be my Brother; nay, though he be a Jew, Mahometan, or Infidel, and not only an Enemy to the Faith, but also to me; he has not lost his Humanity, though he lost his Religion and Goodness; he has not drunk of *Circe's Cup*, he is not become a Lion or a Wolf: & *docet Christus, delicto alterius non tolli Naturam*, and Christ teaches us, that a mans Nature is not destroyed by his Sins, the Image of God remains still in him, and he is yet a Member of Mankind: and whoever shall obliterate this Character, though but in his Uncharitable Estimation, is impious and sacrilegious; and because his Brother has done something unworthy of his Relation to him, he does that which is unworthy of his Creation, unworthy of the Divine Character he bears.

The Word *Enemy* ought to be a mere Notion or empty Term in Christian Religion, or to be Relative to nothing, but to Sin and Satan, to the Devil and the Devil's Works; God and Nature made all men Brethren; Malice, Interest, or Chance, made them Strangers or Enemies. Says *Hierocles*, *To a Good man no man is an Enemy, i. e.* a Good man may be hated; but he will not hate again; he may be treated hostilely, but he will not use another as an Adversary. And this unconquered Love, *of returning good for evil*, is the truest and noblest Badge of our Christian Profession. The Disciples of the Philosophers were distinguished by the Various Opinions of their Masters; those of the Lawyers by particular Sentences and Interpretations of the Law; the Scholars of the Pharisees by certain Traditions and Observations: But Christ would have his Disciples known by no Vain-glorious Marks or Distinctions, *But by this*, says he, *shall men know that you are my Disciples, if ye love*

one another : And those that hate their Brother, be it upon what Pretence soever, Judaize ; and though they wear their Baptismal Cross as conspicuously on their Foreheads, as the Pharisees did their Phylacteries, they are Disciples of the Synagogue.

I shall add but one thing more, and conclude this Point. Though we are oblig'd to love one another, *i. e.* All men to love all men, we are not obliged to love all men alike. Our heavenly Father, who is set to be our Example in general Beneficence, does not do so ; though his Love be Universal to all, 'tis not Equal to all : but as *Seneca* says of Earthly Kings, *Rex honores dignis dat, congiarium & indignis*, a King bestows common Largesses both on the Worthy and Unworthy, but Offices and Charges of Honour he confers only on the Worthy. So the King of Heaven sends his Rain and makes the Sun to shine on the Good and Bad, on the Just and Unjust ; but does not in the like promiscuous manner and without Distinction scatter the Gifts of his Holy Spirit ; he shews himself a Common Father to all men, but a Gracious Father only to the Righteous. And we ought to conduct our private limited Charity by the like Rule, shed the common Influences of it on all Mankind, even as far as we can extend them : but when they will not reach both to Believers and Unbelievers, then to give the preference to Believers : for the Alliance of Grace is yet straiter, than that of Nature. And thus *S^t Paul* states this Duty, *Gal. 6. 10. As we have opportunity, says he, let us do good to all men, but especially unto the household of Faith.* And I conceive after this manner we are to understand what is said *Ecclus 12. 4. Give to a godly man, and help not a Sinner ; i. e.* help the Godly man rather ; when thou canst not relieve both, chuse to relieve the first.

first. And let thus much suffice to be said of the Object of our Charity. I proceed to the Reason that inforces it, which is taken from its Operation and Effect, *It covers Sins*, together with the Extent of that Effect, not one or two, but many and many Sins ;

For Charity shall cover the multitude of Sins.

These Words are Parallel to the last Verse of the fifth Chapter of St James, *He that converteth a Sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a Soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of Sins.* But in some Copies, both in this place and in my Text, the Original has not *καλύψει* in the Future Tense, *Charity [shall] cover a multitude of Sins*, implying the Sins of the Charitable Man, but *καλύπτει* in the present, *[Does] cover a multitude of Sins*, implying the Sins of other men : as 'tis Prov. 10. 12. *Hatred stirreth up Strife, but Love [or Charity] covereth all Sins*, i. e. hideth and beareth with the transgressions of other men : and thus again 'tis said 1 Cor. 13. 4. *Charity suffereth long, and is kind.* In which words the Apostle speaks of a prime Act of Charity, not of its Reward ; of the Goodness it shews, not of the Recompence it shall receive. But there will be no need to contend for rendring of the Words either way : for both these Propositions are true. Charity is a benign Vertue that pardons the Sins of those that offend against us. And again, Charity is so acceptable a Vertue in the Sight of God, that for its sake he will pardon many Sins committed against him. I shall therefore handle the Words in both Senses.

And first, *Charity shall cover the Multitude of Sins*, i. e. of our own Sins against God. Sins are said to

be *hid* or *covered* in Scripture, when they are pardon-
 ed: so *Psal.* 32. 1. *Blessed is he whose unrighteousness*
is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. And again,
Psal. 84. 3. *Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy peo-*
ple, thou hast covered all their Sins. Covering of Sins
 imports not the concealing them in relation to God's
 Sight or Knowledge, but in relation to his Justice or
 Punishment: as men are said to forget Injuries, not
 in a Sense of Memory, but of Mercy, when they re-
 member them not to revenge them: as *Joseph* for-
 got his Brethrens selling him into *Egypt*, not as *Pha-*
raoh's Butler forgot *Joseph* in Prison. But may not
 then the same Question be ask'd here, which the
 Scribes and Pharisees ask'd in the Gospel? *Who can*
forgive sins, but God alone? In what Sense can Cha-
 rity be said to *cover* or *pardon Sins*? for covering or
 pardoning of Sins, and Justification, are one and the
 same thing, the peculiar Prerogative of God, and
 his free Gift of Grace through Jesus Christ: and to
 affirm, that Charity, or any other Vertue whatso-
 ever, can work this Work belonging only to God,
 were to make it, as *S^t Hilary* speaks, *ambitiosa errorum*
patrona, an ambitious or aspiring Patroness of Errour,
 to make it affect the Throne of God like *Lucifer*;
 to attribute to an imperfect humane Vertue the Power
 of the Deity, and to advance that to be a Giver
 of Pardon, which stands in need to receive Pardon it
 self. When 'tis said therefore, *That Charity shall co-*
ver our Sins, it means only, That it will dispose God
 to shew us Favour, that it is an acceptable Vertue in
 his Sight, and if we come qualify'd with this Grace
 for his Mercy, which is a special Condition also of
 his Covenant, we shall not fail to obtain it; but may
 more powerfully urge this Petition, *Forgive us our*
trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us:
 not,

not, as the Papists teach, upon the Presumption of Merit, but upon the Confidence of God's Promise and Covenant, *Fac hoc, & vives*; Do this, and thou shalt live.

Secondly, If we take the Words in the other Sense, Charity covers the Sins of other men against us. Charity does this many ways, but I shall mention only three: 1. *Remittendo*, by pardoning and forgiving them: and this is the perfectest and most absolute way of covering Sins of all other: for thus Sins are covered, as, I said, God covers them; he that remits Offences, when he has right to do it, restores the Person guilty to the State of Innocence again; and does not so much cover his Transgressions, as utterly take them away: as he on the other side that revenges or punishes Offences, registers and preserves the Memory of them; as the Widow of *Zerepath*s Expostulation with the Prophet *Elijah* imports, *Art thou come*, says she, *to call my Sins to remembrance, and to slay my Son?* to punish her old Guilt, and to revive it, was all one in her account; to slay her Son, to call her past transgressions to remembrance.

2. Charity covers the Sins of other men, *corrigendo & medendo*, by Correcting and amending them, by turning their Vicious Habits into Vertuous: and thus it covers Sins, as a Plaster does a Wound; its covering is its healing them, and bringing it to sound flesh again. But then much Prudence and Skill is requir'd in this Point of Charity, we must be sure that our Corrections of our Brethren be medicinal and salutary, that our Cures of Mens Minds and Manners be conducted with as much Caution and Tenderness, as Surgeons and Physicians use in the Cure of their Bodies. The first Caution therefore that I shall give, is, That we do not mistake the Disease, and cast the Pa-

tient

rient into a Worse Condition ; bring him out of a light Distemper, into a more dangerous and deadly. There are many Spiritual Physicians in these days, who, like the Pharisees of old, compass Sea and Land to make Proselytes, and then render them sevenfold more the Children of Hell, than they were before. The second Caution which I shall give, is, That if soft and gentle Remedies will work the Cure, we do not apply rough and sharp ones ; affect to operate with Saws, and Knives, and Fire, use cutting and corroding Reproofs, where Oils and Balsams, milder Counsels will suffice : a Physician ought to compassionate the Sufferings of his Patient ; and the Reformer of his Brother that shews more Rigour and Austerity than is necessary, acts the part of a Tyrant, not of a Councillor ; and leaves it to be suspected, that his Design is not so much to reclaim, as to insult over him ; to make him a Convert, as to dress up a Trophee to his own Pride. Churlishness and Harshness hardens the Bread that's given in Alms, into a Stone ; whereas on the other side, Mildness and Gentleness renders the sharpest Reprehensions, sweet ; and the severest Discipline, grateful. The last Caution I recommend, is, If the Disease or Sin be disgraceful, that we not only shew our selves good Physicians, but good Men ; perform the Duty of Confessors, as well as of Reformers ; hide the Shame, as well as amend the Crime : Open Reprehension turns into Scandal, and that which would have been Advice, if secret ; publisht, becomes a Libel.

3. Charity covers the Sins of other men, *benignè interpretando*, by favourably Interpreting of them, and taking them in the best Part, by setting all Actions, even Injuries themselves in the most advantageous Light ; as *Joseph* call'd not his Brethrens ill-Dealing

Dealing with him (in selling him into *Egypt*) their Envy or their Malice, but God's Providence ; and looking upon the Success, and not upon their Intention, he upbraided them not for their Cruelty, but congratulated the Preservation of his Father's House. And those that will have God look with favourable Eyes upon their Miscarriages, must in like manner behold and excuse the Miscarriages and Delinquences of others : where the Intention appears to have been Evil towards them, content themselves, if the Success be Good ; and when the Success is Ill, yet persuade themselves the Meaning was not so bad ; and when they can make no fair Construction of either of them, then consider if themselves would not have done the same upon the like Temptation, or have not done Worse in some other Instance. And thus where they cannot preserve their Charity by a candid Interpretation of their Neighbours Defaults, support it yet on the Consideration of their own Infirmities ; where they find them not Kind, Just, or Reasonable in their proceedings, remember that themselves are as Unkind, Unjust, and Unreasonable as they.

And now I shall not have much to do in the last place, to shew the Extent of the Operation of Charity, *viz. That it covers a Multitude of Sins* : For if it covers all our Own Sins, and all the Sins of other Men ; not only a Great Number, where a Greater Number yet remains ; but the whole Infinity of them, though they out-vie the Leaves of Autumn, and the Sand on the Sea-shore ; we may well allow the Apostles Expression, *That Charity covers the Multitude of Sins*. And I doubt not to understand the Words in their utmost Latitude, Our Lord commands us to forgive our Brother seventy times seven times,

times, which is a definite Number set for an indefinite, and imports as much as to forgive him without Measure or Number, if he request it : Again, *Luke 6. 37.* he says, *Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven,* and without all doubt, as Unlimitedly as he commands us to forgive, he will forgive : for 'tis not imaginable that God's Benignity should be less than his Creatures; that when he requires of us to remit the Sins of others totally and plenarily, that he will remit ours partially and restrainedly.

And if it be said, There are some Sins mentioned in Scripture, as the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall neither be forgiven in this World, nor in the World to come : I answer, This is no Objection : For where such Sins are found, 'tis not possible that Charity, or any other Grace, can be found to mediate for the Transgressor ; such Sins do not only offend against God's Laws, but deny his Deity ; and the Committers of them are not only Transgressors, but Apostates ; and unpardonable not on the account that their Crimes are above his Mercy, but renounce it ; or that they transcend the Promise made to Charity, but are destitute of the Virtue.

And if it seems too high a Prerogative to ascribe to Charity, or to any other Single Virtue whatsoever, and such as derogates from the rest, and makes them useless, to say, *It covers all Sins* ; I answer, That Charity, nor no other Virtue in a high and Heroick Degree, are Single, but Complicated Virtues : and whoever shall consider what *S^t Paul* says of Charity throughout the thirteenth Chapter of the First to the *Corinthians*, and again, *Rom. 13. 8.* *He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law* ; will confess 'tis not a Single Virtue ; but that whoever has
Charity

Charity in an Eminent Degree, must also have Faith, Justice, Liberality, Patience, Humility, Self-denial, even a whole Conjugation or Constellation of Christian Graces. And that where this Vertue is entertain'd, there all Quarrels and Dissentions, secret Malice and open Injuries, both the greater Outrages and more petty Vexations and Molestations so much complained of in humane Society, are utterly interdicted and banisht. Where Charity has its abode, indifferent actions are not put upon the Tenter, and men made guilty by Censures, when their Lives are Innocent. Calamities and Misfortunes are not reckoned among Crimes, and the Miserable judged void of Goodness, because they are void of Success. Brutish and voluptuous Affections are not call'd Vertues; Lust, the greatest Enemy to Charity, stamp't with the Specious Title of Love. Men are not seen to visit their Lawyer oftener than their Neighbour; to seek his Ruine and undoing, whom 'tis their Duty to protect; to keep him upon a perpetual Guard and Alarm, whose Security should be as precious to them as their own, giving him cause to complain, That he rather borders on the Den of a Dragon or some savage Beast, than on the Habitation of his Christian Brother. Men disturb not, for every Nothing, the Quiet of their own Families, making their Houses resemble the Habitation, the Poets describe, of *Æolus*, places of continual Storms and Tempests. Look not upon the Peace and Safety of their Country with a more malignant and malevolent Aspect, than a fatal Comet; hatch not worse Mischiefs in their black Cabals, than are brooded in the poysonous Womb of the Air, when the Contagion of a Plague is fermenting in it. Men rend not the Church in pieces to patch up their Beggars-

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ly Fortunes, or to cover their more beggarly Endowment; knowing the Perverseness of men is such, that a mean Harangue will lead them sooner into Sedition, than the most powerful Oratory will be able to retain them in their Duty and Obedience; and that their Voices which sound so loud and shrill in the Cause of Schism and Rebellion, would be hoarse and flat in the Defence of Loyalty and Conformity. Against these, and infinite Disorders more, Charity is the best Catholicon, the best General Antidote can be prescribed, *Which, as the Apostle says, seeks not its own things, but the things of another.* And if we entertain this Vertue, it will not only remove those Mischiefs which are already on foot, but prevent those that are springing up; it will defend us, not by the Power of Arms, but by turning Wars into Peace; Ill-Will into Love; Enemies into Brethren; by making the World one Common Family, and of one Common Interest; by making God our Common Father, and Heaven our Common Aim and Ambition; to the attaining the highest Honours and Dignities in which Kingdom, 'tis not Envy and Strife, the crossing and frustrating Mens Endeavours, but the furthering and assisting them, that conduces.

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, &c.

The

The Twentieth Sermon.

MATTH. XXII. 46.

*On these two Commandments hang all
the Law and the Prophets.*

THE Law being a large Body, consisting of many weighty Precepts upon several distinct accounts; as that of the Sabbath, for the remembrance of the Creation of the World and the Redemption out of *Egypt*; that of Tythes, for the maintenance of the Sanctuary and the Priests; that of Sacrifices, for the purging away transgressions; that of Circumcision, for the sealing of the Covenant, and which for its better remembrance was rigorously carved into the very Flesh of the Covenanters, &c.; the Jewish Doctors (more curious to compare the Excellence of their Precepts, than solicitous to obey them; to make them contest their Priority with one another, than to reform and regulate their Lives by them;) made it a Question of the highest concern,

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Which Commandment had the Preheminence of all the rest. And our Lord in those days opening, as 'twere, a School of Divine Knowledge, and professing a Solution of all Difficulties in the Revealed Will of God to men; a Pharisee (either to shew his Skill in the Law, or to try our Lord's; to inform himself, or to have whereat to cavil;) put to him this so controverted Point among those of his own Sect, *Quenam est suprema Lex?* among the many Great Commandments, which is the Queen, or Supreme Commandment? the Law, as one may say, that gives Law to all beside? Our Lord (whose custom it was not to answer directly to the impertinence of the Asker, but to take occasion from his malice, mistake, or the like, to make known some important Truth) satisfies not the folly of the enquiry, Which Law had the Precedence to the prejudice of the rest, but declares, That the End and Design of all God's Laws is *Piety and Charity, the love of God, and the love of our Neighbour*: brings these two Duties (which lay overwhelmed and neglected under the Rubbish of vain Traditions, over-seen like *Saul* in the Stuff and Lumber) not only into Competition with the Commandments more highly prized by them, but as the tallest and most Illustrious anointed them with the Royal Oil, and set the Crown upon their heads. The Love of God, and of our Neighbour are not distinct formal Laws, but the Drift and Scope of the Whole Law, *duæ Cardines Tabularum*, the Hinges on which the two Tables and all the preaching of the Prophets hang and turn, and without which they would fall to the ground, *i. e.* have nothing of Vertue or Moment in them. But our Lord having styled them two Commandments, has made them so by his authority, and as such, I shall observe in them these two General Parts: I. The

I. The Substance of them, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, And thy Neighbour as thy self.* And

II. The high Dignity of them, by reason of the Dependence of the Whole Law and Prophets on them, *On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*

In the First of these two General Parts, the Substance of these two Commandments, I shall observe more particularly these three things.

1. The Duty enjoyn'd, which is the same in both Commandments, *Love.*

2. The Objects of this Duty, *God and our Neighbour.*

3. The Measure or Degree in which the Love to each Object is commanded, *viz. God to be lov'd with All the heart, And our Neighbour as our self.*

I begin first with the Duty enjoyn'd, which is the same in both Commandments,

Love.

To love a Person, as *Aristotle* defines, is to wish him well, and to procure things Good and Agreeable to him for his own sake. And this Rule of Love to Men, may teach us what Love we ought to pay to God: for we ought to wish Well to God, and to procure things Good and Agreeable to him. And if any ask, Wherein we can do this to God? I need look no further for an Answer than the second Petition in the Lord's Prayer, *Thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done in Earth as 'tis in Heaven.* It consists in the Execution of God's Will, and the Extension of his Glory: For all other things besides these are nothing to God, as the Psalmist says, *My goods are nothing*

nothing unto thee. The Riches of this World, and the most precious things in its account, are contemptible in his Sight : but these two which I have named, he esteems, and in some measure wants and desires, possesses not perfectly and absolutely as he would, All his Creatures do not acknowledge him, honour him, worship him, delight in his Dominion, pay a ready cheerful Obedience to his Commands, as the Angels in Heaven do ; notwithstanding that they are reasonable, honourable, beneficial, have more of Profit, than of the Yoke in them. But so it is, there is another God of this World that blinds most men, and leads them away captive with divers Lusts, and they chuse rather to be Vassals and Drudges to this Usurper and Tyrant, than to be Nobles and Princes, even adopted Children to the King of Heaven and Earth. And with good reason holy Men in every Age have pray'd for God's Kingdom, *i. e.* the Encrease of Righteousness, and of the Number of the Faithful : for God is yet, in a manner, like those Princes, which are outed of part of their Dominions, and deny'd the Obedience of whole Nations of their People, and his Loyal Subjects can no way shew their affection so much to him, as by espousing his Interest, abetting his Title, employing their best Endeavours to reduce the Rebellious to Allegiance ; by wishing with the Psalmist, *That Kings and all People, young men and maidens, old men and children, would praise and glorifie his holy Name.* 'Tis the business of Great Ministers of State to understand the Strength and weakness of Foreign Princes, the Commodities and Defects of their Countries, that they make the most advantageous Alliances for their own Masters, and they are held the best Politicians that do this best : But if both those of the highest Condition,

Condition, and also of the lowest and meanest, even all People would set to their Power to serve the Great Monarch of Heaven and Earth, they would find no Policy comparable to this; that the promoting of his Designs, would be the most certain way of promoting their own, whether publick or private; they would find, that they would thrive like *Jacob*, that all things would prosper under their hands like *Joseph*, that they would return with constant Victory like *David*, and heap up Gold and Silver like *Solomon*. *Numa*, though a Heathen, reply'd so confidently on this Policy, that when he was told on a time, That the Enemy was drawing up against him, he answer'd, And I am praying against them; And when 'twas said, They were charging, he reply'd, and he was Sacrificing; assuring himself the Gods would not neglect his Safety, while he was solicitous for their Worship.

But you will say, *Is it needful that we should wish for the Encrease of God's Kingdom? does he want the help of his Creatures?* No. *Is he not Omnipotent, and can bring to pass whatever seems good to him?* Yes. *Who has resisted his Will?* As the Question is ask'd, None: and yet it may be as truly said, Who is there that has not resisted his Will? What was spoken of *Israel*, may be affirmed of all Mankind, that they are a rebellious and gain-saying People. God, 'tis true, is Omnipotent, and his Power never fails; he brought the World out of nothing by his Word, and by his bare Word can reduce it again to nothing; if he had pleas'd, he could have created a Generation of Men that should have served him regularly and constantly, fatally and necessarily, as the Fire burns, and the Sun and the Moon move in their Courses. But this is not the Service that God wants,
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and which we are to pray for in his behalf; 'tis the Free and Voluntary, not the Constrain'd, Service of his Rational Creatures, that Men would obey him out of Love and Choice; as his Dominion is gracious, that they would desire it; as it is beneficial and honourable, that they would delight in it. Compell'd Righteousness is no Righteousness; 'tis in Obedience, as in Charity; he that gives grudgingly and of necessity, does not give, but is tax'd; and he that obeys of Compulsion, is a Slave, and not a Voluntary. 'Tis reported of the famous Painter *Apelles*, that when he had finish'd any rare Piece, his custom was *latere post tabulam*, to hide himself behind it, that he might hear what Passengers said of it, and that he car'd for no Approbation, but what came in this free way. After the like manner, God exposes to the View and Consideration of Men his Works of Power and of Wisdom, of Mercy and of Goodness, and then delights *latere post tabulam*, to conceal himself in his inaccessible Glory, and to observe what free and unextorted Returns of Honour and Love they will bring him in; all forc'd or feign'd, Superstitious and Hypocritical Acknowledgments being odious to him. And now after all that has been said, in strict speaking, God stands no more in need of our Obedience and Worship, than he does of our Riches: as 'tis said, *Acts* 17. 24. *He dwelleth not in Temples made by hands, neither is he worshipp'd by mens hands.* The meaning of his being outed of part of his Kingdom and denied his full Dominion, in truth signifies no more, But that he has not yet extended the Salvation of Men to the Bounds his Goodness designed.

But to proceed. We said, Love did not only Wish, but Procure things good and acceptable to the Person belov'd: and we ought not only to wish
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the Execution of God's Will, and the Extension of his Glory, but to set to our hands to Effect what we pray for : as it is not sufficient, in Point of Charity, to give good Words only to the Poor, to say, *Be thou warm, be thou fill'd, God assist thee, and the like*, when we can supply what they want our selves: so 'tis not sufficient in our Love to God to say only, *Thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven* : but we must zealously and industriously do his Will, and endeavour all we can to promote his Kingdom. Says our Lord to St Peter, *Simon Peter, lovest thou me?* Lord, reply'd he, *thou knowest that I love thee*. And yet notwithstanding that he knew the Sincerity of his heart, he ask'd him the same Question three times. Why? to grieve Peter? or that he delighted in the repetition of the Profession of his Love? No, but to excite him to a more diligent Execution of his Apostleship, *Feed my Sheep*. And the Method which our Lord here prescribes to Peter must be observed also by us in advancing the Kingdom of God, *When thou art converted*, says he, *strengthen thy Brethren*; We must first set up the Kingdom of God in our own hearts, before we attempt to erect it in others. As he is unfit to be a Teacher, that is not first well instructed himself: So he is not fit to be a Reformer, that is not first reform'd himself: for his Evil Manners will certainly defeat his Sermon, and instead of making others righteous by his preaching, he will render himself ridiculous. 'Tis a Noble Undertaking to bring others to the fear of God, but 'tis an indispensable Duty to serve God our selves: says St James, *He that converteth a Sinner from the Error of his ways, shall save a Soul from death* — (that's an Heroick Action) *and shall hide a multitude of Sins*, (that's a necessary Concern.)

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Self-reformation is the most Effectual Step we can make to promote God's Glory, 'tis such a Giantly Step, as I may say, as reaches from the Setting out of the Course to the End of it ; 'tis like the first Step of the Sun above the Horizon, which darts Rays to the furthest Circumference of it, and fills the whole Hemisphere with Light and Vigour, which these Words of our Lord seem to allude to, *Let your Light so shine before men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Nothing so illustrates the Gospel, nothing so powerfully converts Sinners, and brings them to glorify God, as the Holy Lives of the Faithful : But I urge not this to exclude other Endeavours to propagate Righteousness, but to shew the great Force and Prevalence that Righteousness has to produce Righteousness. I proceed to the Objects of our Love, which are two, God, and our Neighbour.

I. God.

Saint John speaks as if there were some difficulty in this Part of our Duty, *Our loving God*: says he, *He that loveth not his Brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ?* Implying, though the Ear be *Janua Scientiae*, the Gate of Knowledge, the Eye is *Janua Amoris*, the Gate of Love, and that to excite this Passion 'tis requisite some Visible Beauty be display'd. But we may say to this, Though we do not see God, yet we may love him, by what we see and hear of him, nay with good reason we may be the more enamour'd on him, because his Perfections transcend not only our mortal Senses, but even all humane Conception: and thus we may fall in love, as Blind Men often passionately do, by report

report and hear-say. But more particularly, there are three Motives why we should love God, comprehended in the very Object, *The Lord thy God*.

I. Because he is God : For that's the Name of the highest Excellence and Perfection, and they are only Glorious and Illustrious things that stir Love and Admiration in us ; we run not out to gaze upon Common Persons, but upon those that are famous for Greatness, Learning, Beauty, Prowess, and the like. Now there is nothing Rare or Admirable of any kind, but 'tis in God in its Fullness and Perfection : and for this reason *Epicurus*, though he believed no Providence, or that Men received any Good or Evil from the Gods, yet he adored them, and sacrificed to them, merely because they were *Glorious Beings*. Had we no other Cause to love God, but for the Stupendous Perfections that are in him, it were sufficient.

But we have greater reason to love him from the Second Motive, Because we have the Honour of Relation to him, he is *The Lord Our God*. The Psalmist thought it a high Obligation to praise him, because he was created by him, *I will praise thee, because I am fearfully and wonderfully made*. But we have not only the Obligation upon us of Creation and Conversation, which is a kind of continual Creation, in common with all Creatures, to love God ; but other Extraordinary and Distinguishing Favours, viz. his calling us to the Knowledge of the Faith, and the Blessed Consequences attending it : and this ought to tune our Harps yet higher, and to be the Subject of many Hymns and Psalms more.

But then, Thirdly, Our greatest Motive of all to love him is, Because he Redeem'd us, after we were lost ; restor'd us ; when by our Sins we were

in a manner uncreated again ; when we had defac'd the *Image of God* in us, our Innocence and Righteousness ; forfeited all our Felicity, and were become the Bond-slaves of Satan ; then he rescued us from Eternal Damnation, and made us again the Children of God. So that as he is *Deus*, or God, to all Mankind, to Christians he is also, over and above, *Dominus*, a Lord, *i. e.* a Redeemer and Saviour. There is nothing so much obliges, as Love and Benefits : *Celsus* the Physician speaking of Philtres or Love-potions, says, *Amor est naturale Philtrum*, Love is a Natural Love-potion, and more powerful than those that are compounded of Drugs and by Incantations. The most stupid of Creatures, the dull Ox and Ass ; the wildest and fiercest, the Lion and Tyger, are brought to love by good Usage ; though they know not the Nature of a Man, they know if they receive Meat at his hands, and be well treated by him, and will love him, and be obsequious to him. And men were more insensible than the Brutes, if when they have received of the Riches of God's Bounty and Goodness, they refuse to love him, because they have not seen his Person, and cannot comprehend his Essence. And God, *Isai. i. 3.* complains of this stupid Insensibility in *Israel*, *The Ox*, says he, *knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib : but Israel doth not know, my people do not consider.* We love God, as *S^t John* says, *because he loved us first*, he began with us, and our Love to him is at best a Gratitude or Retaliation : if therefore the innumerable and inestimable Benefits of God work no return of Love in us to him, we deserve not only to have our Names rased out of the Number of Men, but to be allowed no place among the better natur'd Beasts, but to be rang'd with Devils,

vils, who are the only Enemies of God for his Goodness, and Haters of him for that which is Excellent and Amiable in him. The next thing I am to shew, is,

In what Measure or Degree we are to love God.

The Words of the Commandment are, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Soul, with all thy heart, and with all thy mind.* On which three Expressions Commentators have many Observations and Criticisms, but more nice than profitable: for as Saint John says of the three that bear witness on Earth, *the Spirit, the Water, and the Bloud, these three are one:* so I may say of these three Expressions in the Commandment, however diversify'd, that in importance they are but One, and may be summ'd up in this single term, *omnibus viribus*, with all thy Strength. Instead therefore of amuzing my Auditory with fruitless Niceties, it will be more worthy the while to take notice

In the first place, That when God commands us to love him with all our Strength or Power, he commands us no more, than what we are able to perform, and not, as some will have it, what is above our Ability, *posse autem hominem quantum potest, nemo sanus negabit*, for that a man can do as much as he can, none that is in his wits will deny; and we are enjoined here, To love God With All our Strength, and not Above it.

Secondly, It may be worth the while to note on the other side, The ambitious Folly and Vanity of the Church of Rome, who, more to exalt her own false Reputation than the Truth, boasts of such performances of her Saints, as are above the measures

tures of Humane Nature. For Example, their living in Desarts, after the manner of *Elias* and *John the Baptist*, and using such wonderful Austerities as have not only mortify'd their Carnal Affections, but so Spiritualiz'd their very Bodies, that they have been seen, to the astonishment of the Beholders, raised and suspended in the Air many Foot above Earth : as if it were as easie a thing to work Miracles, as to write a Legend, or tell Lies ; to bring God to comply with the Follies of Men, as for them to conceive or fanse foolish things ; as if again it were as easie to live a Miraculous Life, as to assume the Name of Heremite, or to live in a Wood ; the last indeed they do in an apish Imitation of *Elias* and *John the Baptist*, which is all that is true in this Piece of Pageantry, they being ridiculouſly ſed by the neighbouring Towns. All that I ſhall ſay to this Affectation of Divine Performances, ſhall be ſomething like that which the Elder *Pliny* ſaid to the Younger racking his Invention for an Oration he was to make, *Viſne melius dicere quàm potes ?* Will you ſpeak better than you can ? So will you ſhew your ſelves Diviner Perſons than you are ? When you are but Men, would you act like Angels ? Have you perform'd all that is enjoined you in the Goſpel ? Are the Commandments of God indeed ſo mean and trifling that they are not worthy to amuſe your Greater Abilities ? The Example of Chriſt's patience, meekneſs, ſelf-denial, &c. ſuch narrow Scenes to ſhew your Spacious Vertue in, that you aſpire to his Supernatural Performances ? He trod no other way to Heaven, than thoſe which honeſt men ordinarily tread in ; and though none was ever ſo abſtracted from the Love of the World, as he ; yet none was more converſant in it ; none abhorr'd Sin equal to him, and none
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yet was more familiar with Sinners ! But to leave these men to their Dreams ; as in Humane Love we may love ardently, and yet be wise ; so in Divine Love we may love Exaltedly, and yet not Extravagantly and affectedly ; we may love God above our selves and the whole World, and yet not above Sobriety. To direct us in the way of this Duty by so many perverted, we need only observe two things, which are express'd both in the Letter of the Commandment, namely, *That we love God with the Heart, And with All the Heart.*

First, *With the Heart, i. e.* unfeignedly, and without Hypocrisie. Hypocritical Love is odious even to Men, we endure not to have Professions made to us, when there is no real Affection ; to be embraced and caressed, when the Heart is far distant from the Outward Behaviour : much less does God suffer such Juggling, but, as St *Augustine* says, *Simulata Sanctitas est duplex iniquitas*, counterfeit Sanctity, in God's account, is a double Provocation ; and he more detests the feigned Saint, than the Open Sinner ; denounces more Judgments in Scripture against those that mock him in this manner, than against those that despise him.

Secondly, We are to love God *with All the Heart* : which implies two things, All in *Quantity or Extension*, and All in *Quality or Intention*. 1. With all the Heart in *Quantity or Extension*, is as much as with the Intire Heart ; not excluding all Inferior Loves, but all Competitor or Rival Loves with our Love of God : and so debarrs not only Idolatry, but all Inordinate Love whatsoever to any Creature, which is a kind of Idolatry. *No man can serve two Masters* : nor no man can love two Opposite Objects, Divers he may, but not Contrary and Opposite ;

sute; but as he loves the one, he must hate or dissemble with the other. 2. To love God with all the Heart in *Quality or Intention*, implies Fervency, and excludes Coldness and Indifferency: Slack Lukewarm Love is neither active nor durable; productive of Service, nor constant in the Day of Tryal; *Demas hath forsaken me*, says St Paul, *having loved this present World*: and no wonder: for 'tis not possible for him that loves this present World, to suffer Persecution for the Gospel. Such as *Demas* love God, as Flatterers love those in Power; who are officious to them in Prosperity, but are sure to leave them in Adversity. As 'twas observed, that none were so forward to break down *Sejanus's* Statues, and to lay their hands on the Hang-man's Rope that dragg'd him to Execution, as those that had saluted him loudest that morning, and were readiest to have proclaim'd him Emperor had his Treason succeeded. Let this suffice to be said of *our Love to God*. I proceed to the *Love of our Neighbour*: In which, as in the former, there are two things to be observed: The *Object* of our Love, *Our Neighbour*. And the *Measure* of our Love to him, *We must love him as our self*.

1. *The Object of our Love, Our Neighbour.*

The *Jews*, before our Lord interpreted to them who was their Neighbour, understood not this Commandment; they allow'd none this Title, but those that were of their Nation, or at least Profelytes to their Religion, to all beside that they were directly Inhumane, they would not shew a Heathen a waste running Water to save him from perishing by thirst, or so much as direct him in the right Way. But our Lord in the Parable of the *Samaritan* taught them, who

who they were to esteem their Neighbour, that 'twas not only those of the same Kindred or Religion, but those of the same Kind or Nature; as 'tis said in the Parable, *Quidam homo, a Certain man fell among Thieves*; no mention is made of what Country or Religion he was, *Tros, Tyriusve nullo discrimine habentur*, in Point of Charity no Difference is to be made between Jew and Gentile, Native and Stranger: Charity or Divine Love knows no Partiality, but where there is an Object of Misery, there is also an Object of Mercy; if there be Distress on the one Side, and Power to relieve on the other, all Circumstances are fitted to shew our Love, and in Christ's account there are two Neighbours met. The Object of our Love, or who is our Neighbour, is so well known, that I shall not need to insist longer on it. The Measure of the Love we are to shew him, requires more Explanation.

We are to love him as our self.

And the Rule is so Excellent, that I may say of it, That if the like Freedom had been allow'd to Men to chuse a Standard of their Love to those of their own Kind, as was allowed, *Isai. 7. 11. to Abaz* to ask a Sign, (*Ask thee a Sign either in the Depth, or in the Height above, i. e. in the whole Circuit of Heaven and Earth*) they could not have found a more apt and congruous, than that which is here prescribed them, *The Love of their own selves*. Which I shall shew in four Regards or Respects.

1. In regard of the Universality of it, 'tis a great Universality where there is no Exception: *S^t Paul* says of our Love to Our Selves, *No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it*. God im-

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planted this Love in every man by Nature, and that with singular Wisdom and Goodness, that his Creatures loving themselves, might conserve themselves in their Being: and we see, when this Love in any afterwards fails, through Miseries which befall them, and that they find no Amability in themselves, they ordinarily make themselves away. God therefore made choice of this Passion implanted in all men in general for Self-Preservation, for the Preservation of our Neighbour, that as our Love never fails to our Selves, so it should never be wanting to others.

2. In regard that this Rule is ever ready and at hand, as present and officious as he in the Gospel that said to our Lord, *Master, I will follow thee wheresoever thou goest. Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, is a Sociable and Concomitant Rule that is never absent, an inherent Direction that prompts us from within, when any Opportunity of doing Good is offered us. Or we may liken it to the Foot of the Compass that stands fixt at home, and guides and carries on the other that roams and circuits about: so this quiescent resident Love we bear our Selves, ought to be the Guide of that Love we extend or carry out to others.

3. In regard that this Rule takes from us all Excuse of Ignorance in performing the Duties of Charity. Men are often Churlish to one another, too apt to say, *How must I love my Neighbour? What must I do to him, to be said to love him? Nescio quid sit Amor*, as the Young Novice is made to speak, *I know not what this Enjoined Love is*. No? why the Pattern of it is within thy self: how dost thou love thine own Person? dost thou not clothe it, when 'tis naked? feed it, when 'tis hungry? cure it, when 'tis hurt? consult for it, when 'tis in Trouble or Danger?

Danger? &c. Do the same for thy Neighbour. There is no need here to turn over Books, or to ask how the Learned have determin'd: but to ask thy self, what thou wouldst do to thy self in the like Cases? What desirest thou? Not, What readest thou? What God says of mens knowing his Laws under the Gospel, *I will put my Law into their Inward Parts, and write them in their Hearts— and they shall teach no more every man his Neighbour, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me:* may be affirmed of the Rule that is given us for the Love of our Neighbour, It needs not be learned or copied out from any other, for the Original of the Duty, is a multiply'd Original in the Breasts of all Mankind.

4. In regard of the Truth and Sincerity of the Rule. No man loves himself with a False or Counterfeit Love, but is truly Dear to himself, will not hurt, will not deceive himself. *David* in the 22th Psalm calls his Soul (or Life) his Darling, *Deliver my Soul*, says he, *from the Sword, my Darling from the power of the dog.* How tender is *David* to *David*? how *David* careth for himself! Why, every Man does this as well as he: and lo here is the Rule of our Love to other Men! With the same Fidelity, with the same Sincerity, with the Same Tenderness, we treat Our Selves, we ought to treat our Other-Selves, our Neighbours. What *David* calls in this place [*his Darling*] is styl'd in the Margin [*his Only-One*] *unicam meam*. Men are allow'd, in a sense of Propriety, to esteem their Own Souls, their own Lives, their own Interests, to be their *Only Ones*: yet in a sense of Charity they are obliged to make this *Onlyness*, or *Singularity*, become *Plural*; and so to look upon themselves as their *Only-Selves*, as to reckon all Men else their *Multiply'd and Several-Selves*. Since

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this Commandment was given, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, all men are made, in a manner, One Man again, as at the first Creation : and I can no more count my self and my Neighbour to be two in regard of Charity, than I can separate my self from my self; seclude him from my Love, than I can seclude my self from it. I shall make but one General Reflection on all that has been said, for Application, and conclude my first General Part.

Although these two Precepts, Of loving our Neighbour *As* our selves, and God *Above* our selves, are founded in Nature, re-inforc'd and bound straiter on us by express Commandments, press'd further in the Gospel, and declar'd to be the Summ and General Design of the whole Law; yet there is one Rival, one Opposite Vicious Principle, which is able to with-hold us from paying Obedience to them. I say, One, because whatever with-holds us beside, may be reduc'd to this One, and that is our *Over-much Love of our selves*. Saint Paul, *2 Tim. 3.* reckoning many Vices, which are causes of perillous Times, brings them all out of the Belly of this Monster, makes them all the Daughters and Spawn of *Self-Love*; says he, *This know also, That in the last days perillous times shall come: for men shall be Lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, without natural affection, &c.* All the cursed Genealogy of Ungodliness and Uncharitableness draw their Extraction from this Stock, *The Immoderate Love of Our Selves*. From hence it is that we think it more reasonable to satissie our vaineft Desires, and to gratissie our most Sinful Affections, than to relieve the most weighty and pressing Distresses of our Brethren: from hence it is, that we set more by our own Opinions and Estimation, than by the Truth it self, or God's Glory; by
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our Ambition or Revenge, than by the Peace and Tranquillity of the Land. The Rule that Divines give men, when they seek Justification from God, viz. *That they go out of themselves, and look upon nothing in themselves*, with a very small change will direct us in the Duty of Love that is commanded us, *We must go out of our Selves, and look less upon what concerns our Selves, if we will love God and our Neighbour as we ought to do.* Some men are praised, and perhaps not undeservedly, for being good Fathers, they have laid up for their Children; for being kind Husbands, they have provided for their Wives; for being bountiful Masters, they have preferr'd their Servants: But yet all this is but to do Good or Charity Oeconomically, or within our own Doors, not Oecumenically or Universally; all this is still but the *Love of a Man's Self*: for he is hardly yet gone out of Himself, that is not gone beyond his Family and Relations; This measure of Love, as our Lord observes, is found among Infidels, *They love those that love them*: but we are to be like our Father which is in Heaven, who sends his Rain upon the Unjust, as well as the Just; we are to love Aliens and Enemies, as well as Friends. The Love that is express'd to Relations, may be the Pin or Hook on which some Single Precept hangs, but not which supports the Stress of the Whole Law and the Prophets, that Honour or Dignity belongs only to these two, *The Love of God Above our selves, And the Love of all men As our selves.* Which brings me to my Second General Part, The Dignity of these two Commandments, by reason of the Dependence of the whole Law and Prophets on them.

The

The Twenty First Sermon.

MATTH. xxii. 46.

*On these two Commandments hang all
the Law and the Prophets.*

THESE two Commandments, *The Love of God, And the Love of our Neighbour*, sustain the Entire Structure or Frame of the *Book of God*, as the two Pillars *Boaz* and *Jachin* bore up the stupendous Fabrick of *Solomon's Temple*: Or rather, to keep to our Lord's Comparison, they are as two mighty Hooks, Hinges, or Pins on which all the Law and the Prophets hang. For the better Explanation of which, I shall do these three things:

I. Shew, how it is to be understood, That all the Law and the Prophets hang on these two Commandments, *The Love of God, And the Love of our Neighbour*.

II. I shall shew the Excellence of Love by way of Essay, so far as to make it appear worthy of the Honour

nour ascribed to it, of sustaining all the Law and the Prophets.

III. I shall add, as a Corollary, how we may attain this Excellent and important Grace, Love, on which all the Law and the Prophets hang.

- I. *How it is to be understood, That all the Law and the Prophets hang on these two Commandments, The Love of God, And of our Neighbour.*

The Law and the Prophets, *i. e.* the Text, and the Gloss or Comment; whatsoever the Law has concisely commanded or implied only, and the Prophets more largely expounded and dilated on, were but to plant this one Duty, this One Master Principle in the hearts of men, *Love*. In every Law there are two Parts, the Matter enjoin'd, and the Rewards and Punishments annex'd, by way of Sanction, for the better Observation of it: For a bare Injunction, not animated and fortified with the Promise of Good things to the Keepers of it, and Threats of Evil to the Infringers, will find but cold Observation among men: *Who, as the Psalmist speaks, are little better than horse and mule, that must be held with bit and bridle [of Penalties] lest they fall upon you.* The Office of the Prophets was to be *Custodes Legis*, the Guardians and Conservators of the Law, they were not to add to the Law, though they were inspired by God as *Moses* was, but to interpret, press, and inculcate the Duties of it, to revive in mens thoughts the Promises and Threats, and thus they were a kind of Mound or Fence to the Law to keep off Transgressions. The Jews had a Sort of Criticks, who with great preciseness observed the Number of the Letters in each Book of *Moses*, how they were written,

ten, together with the Various Readings, and these were call'd the *Maſorites*, becauſe they were, as the Word imports, a Hedge to the Law: But with much better right the *Greater and Leſſer Prophets* may deſerve this Name. And upon this account it is, that theſe two, *the Law and the Prophets*, or *Moſes and the Prophets*, are ſtill quoted by our Lord together, who ſays not, The Law and the Interpretation of the Scribes, or the Law and the Determination of the Priests, (though in leſſer Matters the People were alſo to harken to them) but *the Law and the Prophets*, which were both of equal Divine Production, and carried on the Same Deſign, the one by commanding, and the other by preaching and inculcating the Will of God and Duty of Men. Now whatſoever the one of theſe enjoins, and the other enforces, our Lord ſays, Hang all upon theſe two Pins, *The Love of God, and the Love of our Neighbour*: And though the Word [*Love*] is not often found in the Law and the Books of the Prophets, though they are not, as I may ſay, ſo much *Canticles*, as the Sermons of Chriſt, and the Writings of his Apoſtles, (in ſome of which there is ſcarce a Verſe but it is even verbally repeated and ingeminated:) yet the Duties which the Prophets urge and preſs, are all Acts of Love to God, and Charity to our Neighbour; and whatſoever elſe they ſeem moſt to intend and employ their Pens about, the propagation of Piety and Charity may be ſeen latent in the Scheme and Contexture of their Diſcourſe, and he that reads the one, ſhall be unawares engaged and intangled in the other.

But then it may be aſk'd here, Seeing all the Law and the Prophets hang on this One Law of *Love*, what need was there of ſo many Specifications of the

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Several Duties contain'd in both Tables ? as, *Thou shalt not kill ? Thou shalt not commit Adultery ? Thou shalt not Steal, &c.* ? For this Single Word, *Love*, comprehending them all in effect, so many Tautologies might have been spared. To this we may say, Men are so crafty and subtil to evade the Duties imposed on them, or pretend Ignorance for their Disobedience, that 'twas not sufficient to set down in Generals the Obligations that lay on them, but it was necessary by Express Prohibitions, and Particular Instances to convince them, when they offended against the Divine Precepts. And for this reason the Law is fain often to descend to many trivial Specifications, to work a lively and sensible Impression of the Justice or Injustice of every Fact in their minds: As for Example, *Thou shalt not reap the Corners of thy Field, nor glean thy Vineyard. Thou shalt not suffer the Hire of the Labourer to remain with thee till the morning. Thou shalt not take his Garment to Pledge, his Bed, nor his Working-tools, nor his upper Millstone, and the like.* Surely to an Ingenious Heart, disposed to Humanity, this particularizing would have been needless, I say, to a Good and Friendly Nature these things are of easie Deduction from the bare Word, *Love*, that all the rest might have been spar'd: we say, *Verbum Sapienti*, a Word to the Wise is sufficient ; but 'tis much truer, *Verbum Amanti*, a single Word to a true Lover is abundantly sufficient to make him recollect the rest of his Beloveds mind. But, I say, Men being generally of a Churlish Disposition, it comes to pass that the Duties both to God and Men, which are to be inferr'd from the General Precept of *Love*, are obscure, or at least pretended to be so ; and that they may have no Colour, from the Abridging their Whole Duty into one Word,

Word, Love, to say, *There is no Obligation upon us to do the things required, shew us where they are commanded, produce the Letter of the Law, and the like: all the Silva Legum, as Justinian calls them, the Forest of God's and Mens Laws, consisting of such Heaps of Precepts, were added, whereas otherwise all the Duties would have been seen to hang on this brief Syllable, Love.*

This Phrase [*do hang upon it*] is a Figurative Expression borrowed from the hanging things upon a Hook or Pin in a Wall, which bears the Stress of their Weight. We find the same Figure used *Isaiah 22. 23.* God determining to make *Eliakim* Treasurer over his House, to shew the Support he should be, by the Influence of his Wisdom and Justice, to the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, he says, *I will fasten him as a Nail in a sure place—and they shall hang upon him all the Glory of his Father's House—all the Vessels, from the Vessels of Cups, to the Vessels of Flaggons: (and then it follows) In that day, says the Lord of hosts, shall the Nail that is fastned in a sure place be removed, and cut down, and the Burden that was upon it shall be cut off.* But I shall shew more particularly three Ways, how all the Commandments hang or depend on the Commandment of Love.

I. As the Parts do upon the Whole, the Whole contains the Parts, and is but the Parts collected into One. And some will have this the only Dependence that is here meant of the other Commandments on that of Love, according to *S^t Paul's* interpretation, *Rom. 13. 9.* *He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the whole Law: For this, Thou shalt not Kill, Thou shalt not commit Adultery, Thou shalt not Steal, &c. are briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy Self.* And the like may be

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said of the Duties of the First Table, *Thou shalt have no other God, but the God of Israel; Thou shalt worship him no other way than he has prescribed, Thou shalt not take his Name in vain, Thou shalt not break his Sabbath,* they are briefly contained in this, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.* And if Love were deeply rooted in the Hearts of men, upon their going about any Act dishonourable to God, or unjust to their Neighbour, it would pull them back from it: for this would be the immediate Question they would ask themselves, By what Rule do I do this? Will it hold according to the Precept of Love to God and to my Neighbour? This particular Fact, which I put forth by way of retail, does it not vary from the General Rule in which it ought to be comprehended as in its Body?

2. The Law and the Prophets may be said to hang or depend upon the Law of Love, because it is the Scope or Drift to which all the Commandments in particular tend: according to that Saying of *S^t Paul*, *1 Tim. 1. 5. The End of the Commandment is Charity, or Love, out of a pure Heart, and good Conscience, and Faith unfeigned, i. e. upon the Ground of the Belief of Remission of our Sins through Christ, to love God and our Brethren for so great a Benefit, and to express our Love in the Works of a good Conscience.* 'Tis not preaching the Law, though never so zealously, as those did *S^t Paul* here speaks of; or the performing the Outward Acts of the Law, as many of the *Jews* were very scrupulous in the Observation of, that makes a Righteous Man according to the Law: but he that does according to the Design and Intention of the Law, *which is Love. Ratio Legis est interpret Legi*, the Purpose of the Law is the best Interpreter of the Law; and they that

that mind not this, as *St Paul* says, *Take their Aim amiss*, and swerve from the End and Intention of the Law, discern not the Grace of Love that runs through it, as the Warp and the Woof do through a Web of Cloth, and wholly sustains the Contexture of it. Without Love all that is Excellent, all that is Divine in the Law would fall to the Ground, as all the Riches and Gallantry of the Veil of the Temple, all the Purple and Scarlet would have lain grovelling on the Earth, without the Tacks or Hooks on which they hung.

3. The Law, *i. e.* all the Vertue, Goodness, and Righteousness it commands, all the Worth and Value of its Duties depend upon *Love*, as the Value of Coin depends upon the Price the Stamp sets upon it: or as a thing that is Accessory depends on its Principle, take away the Principle and the Accessory is nothing: so take away *Love*, and all the Commandments are insignificant and nothing. And this *Saint Paul* shews, *1 Cor. 13.* That even the most Specious, and seemingly Heroick Performances of Christianity it self (*as a man's giving his Goods to feed the Poor, and his Body to be burned, &c.*) if they be not accompanied with *Charity* (or *Love*) are all nothing: the Dignity of these Works depending so absolutely upon this Grace, that in God's Esteem to suffer Injury only out of Love to our Fellow-Christian, is more than to suffer Martyrdom; not to envy, not to be puffed up, not to despise our Brother, is more in his Eyes than to speak with Tongues, than to prophesie, than to understand all Mysteries. And indeed there is more true Religion in this one Benign Good Natur'd Vertue, than in the Ostentation and outward Grandeur of all the other. But the Excellence of Love, and that 'tis worthy of the Honour ascribed

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to it, to sustain all the Law and the Prophets, is the next thing I am to shew.

The Excellence of Love, &c.

This I shall make appear by four Reasons, 1. For the Natural, Universal pleasing Effect Love has upon All, and even upon God himself, as well as men and other Creatures: insomuch as God for his part requires almost nothing else from us, *Now, O Israel! what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God — and to love him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul? Deut. 10. 12.* To be belov'd is so grateful a thing, that men receive delight even in the Affection of Brute Creatures: and we see, that such as are not qualify'd to deserve any true Love, are taken with the Similitude only of it, the gross Flatteries of them that counterfeit it. Sinners, as our Lord tells us, *love those that love them*: and St Paul, 1 *Thess.* 2. 15. brands the Jews for their want of Love, as with a Crime of so high Nature, as deserved to be reckoned with their murdering the Prophets, and of Christ himself, says he, *Who have kill'd the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets; and persecuted us, and are Contrary to all men.*

2. Because Love easily forgives Injuries, hardly perceives any, can never possibly wrong the Party Beloved; and the Object, or Party Belov'd, of Divine Love is all Mankind: So that there needs no Admonitions here to suppress Malice or Uncharitable Inclinations, for the first Motions of them never arise in the heart to be suppress'd.

3. Because Love of all other Vertues of the Soul goes forth of a Mans self, and places its Content in the Good it does to another: that so hard a Duty to
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Flesh and Blood which the Apostle commands, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Let no man seek his own, but every man an Others Wealth*, is its Choice and Delight. No Vertue therefore qualifies us equal to this to perform the Works of Piety, Justice, and Charity.

4. Because of the wonderful Activity of Love in the Soul, and enflaming it more than any other Vertue to Great Actions: for indeed whatsoever is Vigorously performed is the Effect of Love. This Grace is like a Fire in the Heart, and makes it restless in what it conceives will be acceptable to the Person beloved; it renders it also undaunted in the greatest Difficulties and Dangers, and for this reason 'tis Faiths chiefest Instrument to conquer the World and the Temptations of it, *This is the Victory that overcometh the World*, says St John, *even your Faith*: but then 'tis that Faith, which, as St Paul speaks, *worketh by Love*. 'Tis a strange word in the Original which the Apostle uses in that place for [*working by Love*] ἐνεργουμένη, which imports as much as being possess'd with Love, as a Demoniack is possess'd with an Evil Spirit, which kind of Persons are ordinarily indued with an Unusual Strength, to do things which naturally they could not do: as the Demoniack that met our Lord out of the Tombs, whom no Chains of Iron could hold, but he brake them asunder. Those that are acted by Love, are transported after the like manner to perform things above their own and other mens Measures: As the Spouse speaks in the Canticles, *Love is strong as Death*, i. e. conquers all things, and nothing can stand against it. 2 Cor. 5. 13. St Paul says again, That for the Love of God, and the cause of the Gospel, and the sake of the Brethren, he had done some things that in the Eye of the World appeared Wild and Extravagant, *But whether we be Beside*

Beside our Selves, says he, *it is to God, or whether we be sober, 'tis for your Cause, for the love of Christ Constraineth us*: For the Influence therefore Love has upon all other Good Works, as well as for its own Good Nature, it is that God so highly Esteems it: and 'tis no wonder that 'tis the Favourite of his Graces, when, as St John says, *God himself is Love*: and though he be no more Love essentially, than he is Wisdom, Justice, Power, or any of his other Attributes: yet because he exerts and diffuses his Love more among men, and is revealed and made known more by it, than by another Attribute, it is spoken of as his Sole Being. And now after so many Excellent things have been said of this Divine Grace, namely, That 'tis the Summ of the Commandments, the Soul of all Vertue, the Favourite of God, and in a Sense God himself, certainly it will be worth our best Endeavours to acquire it: and how we may do this is the last thing I am to shew.

How we may acquire or attain Divine Love.

That we may take the right course to attain this Vertue, we must look upon it, as upon all other Vertues, partly as a Grace of God's bestowing, and partly as that which is to be acquired by our own Labour; for there is something of Gift, and something of Industry in it. First, We must look upon it as a Grace of God's Donation: For what our Lord says of Faith, *That all men have it not*; and St Paul, *That no man has it of himself*, but it is the Gift of God, may likewise be said of the *Love of God, and of our Neighbour*, We have them not of our Selves, but they are Heavenly Gifts, born of a Divine Seed, and we must not conceive, that by our own mere
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Natural Power and humane Will we can acquire them to the Soul, and that we have no more to do, but to resolve to obtain them, and the Possession will follow : But we must seek them by devout Addresses from God, and expect them from his Bounty, they being, as I say, Graces, as well as the Fruits of our Labour. As our Church therefore sets before the Epistle of Charity a Collect or Prayer to God for it, [Send, O Lord, into our Hearts the most Excellent Gift of Charity, without which all our doings are nothing worth, &c.] we must also supplicate for this Grace, before we can hope to attain it.

But then, Secondly, 'tis also an Acquisition of Labour, and to be arriv'd to, as other Vertues or Habits, by Industry. There are that have written of the Art of *Unchaste Love*, and all the Mysteries of it, taught men how to accomplish their Wicked Ends, which it would have been happier for them if they had been ignorant of. And the Art of *Godly Love* may be also taught, Rules and Precepts given to make men Masters of it : And the Way in general to raise our Affections to the Love of God, is to take the same course which we do when we betray our selves into a humane Passion, reflect on what is Excellent and Amiable in God, meditate on his Unparallell'd and Glorious Perfections, which are sufficient to ravish us from the Desire of all Earthly things. The reason that the Love of many waxes cold, and their Affection to God, as I may say, is without Affection, without heat and ardour, is because they understand not the Beauties of his Essence, and the Glorious Operations of his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. Men profess to be Worshipers of God, to be brought up and skill'd in the Knowledge of him, and

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his Religion, but generally they are Strangers to him and his ways ; and what the Psalmist says of the Ungodly, *That they care not for God, neither is God in all their thoughts*, I fear, without Injustice, may be affirmed of most men, *That they care not for God, neither is he in all their thoughts* : and then what wonder is it, *ſi ignoti nulla cupido* ? if men have no longing after a Good that they are ignorant of, or at least never weigh and consider ? The Spouse in the *Canticles* numbers up and runs over in her Thoughts the manifold Graces that are in *Chriſt*, which made him ſo amiable in her own and others Eyes, before ſhe ſigh'd out her Love for him. *My Beloved*, ſays ſhe, *is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand* : again, *Be cauſe of the Savour of thy Ointments, therefore do the Virgins love thee*. There muſt be ſome Fewel for the Flame of Divine Love, as well as for that of Carnal ; and if men excite not their Love to God by the Contemplation of his Sublime Perfections and Goodneſs, their Love will be no better than the dead Carcaſe of a Paſſion, than the cold Picture of a Flame.

And if any ſay, A high and abſtracted Contemplation of the Nature, Properties, and Attributes of the Deity, is only fit for Philoſophers, who have Learning and Subtilty to penetrate into them ; but they come not within the comprehension of Common Men, though otherwiſe Godly : I anſwer, Neither need they be ſolicitous in this matter, there are other Motives to ſtir men up to the Love of God, no leſs Excellent, and ſubjected to the meanest Capacity, *viz.* thoſe which are taken from his Love to us firſt, his manifold and never-to-be-enough-acknowledged Benefits both Spiritual and Temporal, eſpecially

ally Spiritual, which he has bestowed upon us through Christ Jesus the Son of his Love, as the Remission of our Sins, the Gift of Grace, the Adoption of us to be his Children, the Promise of the Kingdom of Heaven, &c. For when all is done, there is no greater Procurer of Love or Motive to it, than to be prevented with the Acts of Love. Says David, *Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me praise his holy Name: who forgiveth all thy Sin, and healeth all thy Infirmities; who saveth thy Life from Destruction, and crowneth thee with Mercy and Loving-kindness.* If men would weigh and consider the accursed and dreadful Condition into which the Guilt of Sin had brought them, that the Wages of it is Eternal Damnation, they would also be sensible how inestimable a Benefit the Remission of Sin, and the Gifts of Grace, and Glory are: And as there can be no greater Motive to winde up mens Affections to God to the highest Pitch, than this Exceeding great Love of God to them, so there will need no other. Instead therefore of heaping up many Motives, I shall leave this one to your Meditations, and proceed to shew what Inducements we have

To Love our Neighbour. And now the whole Hour would not suffice me to give a particular account of them, some drawn from Mankinds being all at first of one Stock and Kindred; others again, from the Renewing this Relation between them, by their being made Brethren through Grace in Christ, and the adopted Children of one Father in Heaven; from mens needing one anothers mutual help, even the Greatest and Happiest as well as the Poorest and Meanest; and the like. But all these Inducements,

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however weighty, I shall wave at present, not having time to insist on them, and restrain my self to the one Motive express'd in my Text, *Because the Love of our Neighbour is one of the two Hooks or Hinges on which all the Law and the Prophets hang*, has the Honour to support at least one of the Tables of the Commandments, one half of the Conditions God requires of men to make them Partakers of his Promises, of the Blessings of this Life, and of the Glory of that to come. And though I said it has the Honour or Dignity to support but One of the two Tables; yet there is that inseparable Connexion between the two Tables, that he that breaks the one, inevitably breaks the other, *Whosoever*, says *S^t James*, *shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all*. 'Tis not possible to offend against the Law, and not against the Law-giver; 'tis not possible to transgress against the Second Table, and not to violate the First; to hate our Brother, and to love God. And the School-men on this account make but one Theological Vertue, of our Love to God, and our Love to our Neighbour: and *S^t John* reckons Uncharitable men among Unbelievers, the Hater of his Brother, and an Infidel to be the same; says he, *If a man says, I love God, and hate his Brother, he is a Lyar*— and again, *he is in darkness, i. e. without Faith or the Knowledge of God*. Our Lord also, *Matth. 25.* pronounces, That whatsoever Love is shew'd to his Brethren, is shew'd to him; *Inasmuch*, says he, *as you have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me*: and again, what is denied to them, is denied to him, *Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me*. The true Love of God carries

ries with it, as a necessary Consequence, the Love of our Brother ; and 'tis but a cheap Piece of Hypocrisie, and a niggardly Lye, to pretend to love God, who is above any Material Expressions of our Love, and to harden our hearts to our Brethren, who stand in need of such things, and whom God has appointed and deputed to be the Receivers of such Tribute in his behalf. And thus as all the Law and the Prophets hang on these two Commandments, *The Love of God, And the Love of our Neighbour* : So these two again depend on one another.

The Summ of all that has been said is this : Love is the End of the Commandment, all the Numerous Precepts contain'd in the Law, point only at this *One grand Duty*, and are but particular Instances and Exemplifications of it. Many things in the Law consist more in a Shew of Goodness, than of true Goodness ; and are rather the Way to Righteousness, than Righteousness it self ; all the Typical Ceremonial Ordinances were but *ad populum phalerae*, as 'tis said, Pumps and Ornaments either to amuse the rude People, or to be Helps to their weak Understanding to bring them to the Knowledge of better things ; while therefore they observed these, they learned to be Religious ; but when they lov'd God and their Neighbour, they were Religious. *Etiam stante Hierosolyms, Jerusalem* even standing, and the Law of the Sabbath being in force, the Strict Rest of it yielded to the Works of it ; and our Lord tells us, *Matth. 12.* None broke and prophan'd the Sabbath more than the Priests toiling in killing and sleaying the Beasts for Sacrifice, and were yet blameless : And upon another occasion of breaking the Sabbath, says.

says he, *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice, i. e.* when both cannot be performed, he prefers the Works of Mercy or Charity to a Brother, before the Outward Duties to God himself: And the learned among the Jews perceived, that even while they did perform the Outward Works enjoined them by the Law, that they were not principally intended in the Law: nay, that in respect of the Works of Love, that they were cancell'd, even when they stood most in force: that which is said of our Lord's particular Obedience, *Psal. 40. Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices thou wouldest not, but a Body hast thou prepared me—— then said I, Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God!* may be said in like manner of the Obedience that is required of all Men, that there is a [*no-luisti*] *thou wouldest not have*, implied in all Commands concerning them, when they clash or come in competition with these two Great Commandments, *The Love of God, And the Love of our Neighbour.* We see what is become of the Purifications, Vows, Sabbaths, Sacrifices, Feasts, New-Moons, &c. they are all, since the bringing in of a better Covenant, *de facto* done away: all that Forest of Laws was cut down by this *Novum Mandatum*, this New Commandment of our Lord's, *Behold, a New Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another.* And not only Shadows and Figures gave way to this Divine Law, but many real and Substantial Vertues vail to this Eternal and never-to-be-out-dated Vertue of *Love or Charity: Whether there be Prophecies, they shall cease; whether there be Knowledge, it shall vanish away: Nay, when Faith and Hope are no more, Charity abideth for ever.* The Noblest Vertues, I may say,
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are without Vertue, the most heroick Acts of Religion are without Religion, if performed without *Love or Charity*: for where this Grace is wanting, they are but Acts of Ostentation; Hypocrisie, or Compliance with mens own humours. That which is therefore the chief Scope of the Law, ought to be the chief Scope of our Lives; and what we see to be the main Drift of God's Precepts, ought to be likewise the main Aim of our Actions.

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, Worship, and Thanksgiving, this Day forth and for evermore. Amen.

THE

THE
Twenty Second Sermon.

LAMENT. iii. 39, 40.

*Wherefore doth a living man complain,
a man for the punishment of his
Sins ?*

*Let us search and try our ways, and
turn again unto the Lord.*

THIS Book is styl'd [*the Lamentations of
Jeremiah :*] representing of, and grie-
ving for the Miseries of *Judah* under
the Captivity of *Babylon :* and so far
'tis justifiable. For who can deny to
them that are in Affliction, the only Consolation of
Affliction, which is to ease themselves by complain-
ing ? to evaporate their Sufferings by the breathings-
out of a Sorrowful Spirit ? This is natural to all men,
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and it would shew an affected Piece of Stoicism to quarrel at it ; the Prophet's Temper had been of Iron, and his Bowels of Brass, if he could have look'd upon the Calamity of his Country with dry Eyes, and an unwounded heart ; if, I say, he could have beheld the People of God, fallen into the Displeasure of God ; the City that was call'd by his Name and the Glory of all Cities, sunk to be the By-word and Scorn of the Heathen ; the Land that so abounded with Inhabitants, to be solitary and desolate ; that was the Stage of Miracles and Divine Favours, to be ruined and accursed. His breaking-out in the first Chapter upon contemplation of so Sad a Change in this admiring Commiseration, (*How is she become a Widow, She that was great among the Nations, a Princess among the Provinces, how is She become tributary ?*) was but a just Passion.

But the Prophet, in the prosecution of his Complaints, teaches us a better Remedy of our Evils, than empty and idle Complaining, viz. to consider them as Punishments, as well as Evils ; as the Effects of God's wrath for our Sins, as well as Miseries ; to join Repentance to our Lamentations ; and amendment of Life to our Uneasiness under God's correcting hand : for the sense of Sufferings, without Contrition for Sin, shews only a love of our Selves and Earthly things, but nothing that is praise-worthy. Our Prophet therefore (like a good Physician that amuses not himself with the Groans or Exclamations of his Patient, but sets himself to find out the Cause of his Distemper, as the readiest way to give him Ease) passes by or reproves the Unseasonable Wailings and Lamentations of those that are in Misery, and lets them know that the Root of all their Mischiefs and Misfortunes are their Transgressions against God's

God's Laws, and to wring their hands and fill the Air with Cries, was Womanish and Childish, when their business was to try and search their Ways, and turn to the Lord, whom they had forsaken by their Iniquities. *Wherefore doth a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his Sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.*

What one says of a good Author he was expounding, *Whereas in the obscure places of many Writers 'tis hard to make out any tolerable Sense, the difficulty I find, is, in the multiplicity of excellent Senses, to know which to chuse; may more deservedly be affirmed of doubtful places in Scripture, That 'tis more difficult to resolve which Sense to prefer, than to find a good one.*

Many are the Interpretations of my Text, and all tending to Edification. Some Expositors, because the Hebrew has no more than [*Why doth a living man complain, a man of his Sins?*] and makes no mention of the *Punishment of them*, interpret the Words after this manner, *Why do men pretendingly or really sorrow excessively for their Sins, and rest there? why do they not rather proceed from Confession, to Dereliction? and from Dereliction to Amendment?* But though this be a good Admonition, there is no reason here to decline the Translation of our Bible, and to leave out [*Punishment*] it being common in the Hebrew to put *Sin*, for the *Punishment of Sin*. *If thou doest well*, says God to Cain, *Gen. 4. 7. shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, Sin lieth at the door, i. e. the Punishment of Sin is at hand to seize thee.* Others there are who observing the Prophet to vary his terms, in the first Clause to say, *Why does a living man complain?* and in the second only, *Why does a Man complain?*

put a weight and Emphasis in *living* : as if his meaning were, *Why does he, that has yet Life and Time, complain, and not rather hope ?* But a *living man* in this place imports no more, than a *man*, or *any man* : this form of Speech being not only usual in Scripture, but among our selves, who say, *No living man* can endure this, when we mean no more than *no man* can endure it. Others understand the words thus, *Why does any Mortal Man complain*, i. e. *murmur*, as if God were cruel, and dealt harder measure to him, than he deserved ; when none ever yet bore the full Burden of his Sins, but God always in judgment remembers mercy ; applying justly to such Repiners, what Solomon says Prov. 19. 3. *The foolish man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.* And not much unlike unto this is their Interpretation, who say, *Why does a living man complain*, i. e. *afflict himself for his Afflictions ? annoy himself for his Annoyances, when Troubles and Molestations are the common Lot of Mankind ?* When, as Job says, *Man is born to trouble, as the Sparks fly upwards ?* Such Wailing and bemoaning speaks only an over-fondness and tenderness of our selves, as if we thought we were fit to be exempted from what our whole Race is obnoxious to : or else a mutinous discontented Spirit against the Sovereign of the World and his Providence. The wiser Heathen may reproach the Pusillanimity, or Undisciplin'd Temper, which soever it is, of such Believers, one of whom could say, *If our Misfortunes proceed from our Enemies, we ought to bear them with Fortitude ; if from God, with Patience.* Others again expound, *Why does a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his Sin ?* Why does any man complain or murmur at his Punishment, and not rather at himself for doing such things as brought the Punishment upon him ? In

In this Variety of Interpretations I shall adhere to that which I toucht upon in my Introduction, as the fullest and most comprehensive of the rest, *viz. Why does any man amuze himself with idle and fruitless Bewailing the Punishment of his Sins, and not rather set to remove the Punishment by putting away his Sins ? Or as the Prophet speaks, By searching and trying his ways, and turning again to the Lord.* And so the Words have these two Parts:

I. A Condemnation of the Course which Men ordinarily take under God's Judgments sent on them for their Sins, *They complain.*

II. The Recommendation of a better Course, which is, *To search and try their Ways, and turn to the Lord.*

I begin first with the Prophet's Condemnation of the Course Men ordinarily take under God's Judgments sent on them for their Sins,

They Complain.

The Complaint of a man under the Punishment of his Sins may be blameable in many Respects, and deserve the Check imply'd in this Question, *Wherefore doth a living man complain ?* But I shall insist only on three.

1. It may be blameable in respect of the Complaint it self: For if it be a mere Complaint, without any Endeavour to get out of the Misfortune, 'tis either an Action without all Design and Purpose, and so is irrational and foolish: or else it pronounces that there is no Redress of the Evil a man lyes under, and then the Complaint is false: for there is no Case and Condition at least of a Faithful Person so miserable, as to be also Desperate and helpless: but as
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Saint Paul says of Temptation, *That God will not suffer his Servants to be tempted above what they are able, but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape* : So in the Punishment of Sin, God does not inflict any so irreverfibly, that there is no Evasion out of his Difpleasure : but if the Sinner make due Application to his Goodnefs, he will remove it ; or fo fupport and comfort him under it, that it will countervail a Deliverance. That therefore which is here tax'd in the frequent Practice of men, is a lazy fruitless bemoaning themfelves, as if they were excluded all poffibility of future Comfort, as well as the prefent poffeffion of it ; a vain and affected Delight to ask our Prophet's Queftion, Chap. 1. 12. of all they meet, but without juft caufe, *Was there ever Sorrow like my Sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me ?* infinuating that great Severity is exercifed towards them, which they have not deferved ; and that they are of the Number of the Innocent, that are afflicted ; of the Noble, that are Unfortunate : and they complain in this fond manner, till at laft they grow in love with their Complaints ; find a Confolation, in the Want of Confolation ; the conceived Singularity of their Condition converting their Difasters into Glory, and a kind of Shadow of Comfort. But if thefe Persons in the mean time would fearch their own Hearts, and make Inquifition into their Lives paft, they would find Caufe enough for God's Wrath, and confefs that their Sufferings were the leaft part of their Demerit ; and their Plumes of Vanity would flag and fink ; this fond Imagination, That Satisfaction was rather due from God to them, than from them to God, would be changed into a fad Repentance ; and they would feek a *Solid Comfort* by humbling themfelves before his Divine Majesty

Majesty in Sack-cloth and Ashes, and not in the vain Complacencies and Ravings of an abused Fancy. But such is the Folly of men (like the Prodigal Son before he came to himself) they set themselves to feed on Husks, when in their Father's House the very hired Servants have their fill of Bread; they mourn and suffer misery, when Musick and Feasting, a Ring and Robe of Honour, *i. e.* the highest Content, is prepared for them, and attends only their suing for it.

2. Mens Complaints may be blameable and reproveable in regard of the Persons against whom they make them. Men commonly complain against Fortune, as if the World were governed as blindly, as they govern their particular Affairs: against their Enemies, when their Enemies have no more power over them, than their Sins give them; and God overrules the most Potent Malice, and makes a Good Mans Enemies to be at peace with him: they complain against themselves, as if their Misfortunes proceeded only from some false or imprudent Step which they had made, and that they were the Efficient, as well as Meritorious Cause of their Sufferings: or, what is yet worse and more dangerous, they charge themselves with Unkindness to themselves, that they are not indulgent enough to their own Content, deny themselves the Satisfaction that are in their power; and this makes them often seek to drown their Cares, as they call them, in Wine; to alleviate their Misfortunes by Debauchery: as *Thetis* in the Poet persuades her Son *Achilles* to comfort his approaching Fate with the enjoying of young Women. But Sin is a sad Refreshment of Sorrow; and the Enlargement which men endeavour to procure from the Arrests of God's Judgments, by letting loose the reins of Lust, is like the Relief an Hydro-
pick.

pick Person seeks in large Draughts of Drink ; which gratifie his Thirst , but quench withal the little Spark of Life remaining to him ; and remove not his Distemper, but make it incurable : Or else we may liken this wicked Course which Men take to ease their Sorrows, to *Saul's* seeking Counsel from the Witch, when the Oracles of God were silent ; he learned by such his Apostasie his approaching Destruction , but he assured it also. The Church of *Rome* has as many appropriate Saints, as they have Needs and Distresses ; and every Complaint of theirs has a Patron to redress it ; *S^t Christopher* at Sea, *S^t Roch* in the time of Infection, *S^t Anthony* when their Cattel are diseased , our Lady of Good-Succour for Women in Child-bed, &c. But God is all the while pass'd by, and all these that I have named, deservedly forfeit Help from him that can only give it, while they perversly seek it, where 'tis not to be had.

3. Mens Complaints may be blameable in respect of the Nature or Manner of them : when though they be rightly Addressed , *i. e.* to God, yet the Complaint it self is not Right, not qualify'd with the Conditions God requires, with Faith, Holiness, Humility , &c. First, If men complain without Faith, they complain to God , as they do to their Fellow-Creatures ; they tell him a Tale of their Wants and Discontents, unload their Breasts of their Evils, but find no Redress : and we may reckon among the Unfaithful, those who refuse or neglect to perform the Conditions upon which alone God has promised to hear the Cries and Complaints of men, though they never so much believe his Power and Goodness : for to be perswaded that God will accept the Prayers of the Wicked, is equal Infidelity, as to be perswaded that he will not accept those of the
Righteous,

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Righteous ; and proceeds, if rightly considered, not from an Excess, but a Defect of Faith : and we may say with S^t James, *Let not such look for any thing at his hands.*

Secondly, If mens Complaints be not seasoned with Humility, they are Murmurs, and not Prayers; Expostulations for Dues, not Supplications for Grace and Favour. Again, if they proceed not from a Gracious and Holy Mind, more from the Sense of their Sins, than of their Sufferings ; from their Sorrow for their Unworthiness and Ingratitude to the Divine Goodness, than for the Chastisements they lye under ; their Mourning and Complaining is but like that which God reproaches *Israel* for, *Hos. 7. 14.* when he had sent a Famine upon them for their Disobedience, *They have not cried unto me*, says God, *with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves* [viz. to make Supplications to me in my House] *for Corn and for Wine, i. e. they bewailed not their Sins, but their Wants; howled not like Penitents, but like Wolves; because their Bellies, not the Sense of their Sins, pinched them; they desired again their loaded Tables and full Cups, they found no mis of Justice, Righteousness, &c.* The Burden of our Complaints must not be the Loss of our Plenty and Prosperity, of our Riches or our Honor, our Health or our Friends; but of the Loss of our Innocence and God's Favour; of the Smart we feel for our Guilt, not of our Punishment, if we will have them accepted by God, without the reprehensive Interrogatory or Check in my Text, *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the Punishment of his Sins?* And after all that has been said, Complaints, even the best of them, Prayers themselves, are but Empty Words and Air without A-
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ment of Life : and therefore in the second place, the Prophet recommends to us a Better Course to deliver us out of God's Displeasure, than Complaining, *viz. To search and try our Ways, and turn again to the Lord.* Which is my second General Part.

Let us search and try our Ways, and turn again to the Lord.

The Prophet's Advice comprehends in it two things: 1. Searching and Trying our Ways in order to Conversion. And, 2^{dly}, Conversion it self unto the Lord.

1. Investigation or searching out our Ways : which is a figurative or metaphorical Expression, taken from the hunting of wild Beasts by the Track or Scent which they leave behind them, and implies, that our Sins many times lye hid from our selves, as well as others, and require Pains and Diligence to find them out. For as those Creatures, which are either profitable or hurtful to us, out of a Natural Instinct hide themselves from us in Holes and other fast and retired Places, till the skillful Huntsman discovers them by their Scent, their Slotts, their Broufings, and the like, and beats them up for the Chace : So those also that have committed Heinous Crimes, know that they are Obnoxious both to God and Man for the same, and use all possible Means to conceal them ; and for their greater peace, not only from the Eyes of the World, but from themselves, *i. e.* from the reflections of their own memory and Conscience : insomuch, that when God awakens and affrights their secure and slumbering Souls with some loud and dreadful Judgment, they are utter Strangers
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to their Sins, and at as high a Loss to find them out as others; and are fain to use no less Diligence to discover them, than they did to conceal them; to serve themselves with the Huntsman's Art, to traverse and search by-ways to recover the secret Lairs of their Lust, the intricate perplex'd Windings of their Injustice, and to follow them by their Scent, as I may say, *viz.* the Scandal and Ill Fame they have left behind them; by their Tracks and wild Rangings, the Breaches made in God's Laws, and the injurious Marks yet remaining of them among men: and before Amendment of Life, Peace with God and their own Consciences can be attained, they must thus hunt back on the Scent, and beat over again the same Ground, to retrieve the Knowledge of those Crimes which either their wicked Habits or Custom of Sinning made them pass over without regret or regard, or their wicked Craft industriously concealed. And this is that which the Prophet means, *by searching out our ways.*

And then [*the trying them*] is much the same thing, being a Metaphor or Similitude borrowed from the Trade of the Gold-smith, who by the Touch-stone and Weights, Fire, and the Waters of Separation, and many laborious Operations, proves and distinguishes false and adulterate Metals from true and sincere, light and counterfeit Coins from current and legitimate. For all Men are more or less Hypocrites, Coiners and Gilders of Brass and Copper, and Utterers of them for good Gold, *i. e.* Embasers of the pure Metal of God's Word, and Clippers of his Commandments, whenever their Reputation or Interest are at Stake, and that there needs either an Extenuation or Varnish for their Evil Actions; and there is no less need of the Gold-smith's or Chymist's

Art, than of the Huntsman's; of the trying our ways, than of the hunting them out. And the same Scriptures which we have perverted and bowed to our Crooked Purposes, are the only Rule and Test by which we can straighten and set them right again; the only Waters of Separation, by which we can discover and discriminate the Allays and Corruptions of our Duties, from the pure and sincere Holiness which ought to have been in them, that can purge away the Dross of our Evasions, Palliations, Self-flatteries, and the like. To try Other mens Ways, as 'tis not so Ungrateful, so it seems not so hard a Task: we hear nothing of late more commonly cry'd in the Streets, than *The Tryal of such a Priest, or such a Sectary; of such a Jesuite, or such a Traiterous Schismatick*; and what by the Sagacity of the Judge, the Uprightness of the Jury, and the False-Brothers among themselves, the Dangerous Thoughts of many Hearts are revealed. But the great Difficulty is to find out a mans Own Ways: we are so much better Alchymists, than Christians; cunning Falsifiers, than honest Disclosers of our Actions; *we so long hug our selves in our Iniquities, till, as the Psalmist says, our abominable Wickedness be found out, i. e. by God, or by some other, but we rarely discover it our selves; we may be deprehended, but we are seldom self-detected.* All generally abominate and execrate the very Names of Sectary and Papist; but we are not so unkind to their Falsifications and Equivocations, as to their Appellations and Denominations; we can give as large Dispensations and Allowances to our selves in any Interested Point as they, though they contradict the express Word of God, and make that glorious Light a mere *Ignis fatuus, a Will.*

a *Will with the Wisp*, and extinguish also the Candle of the Lord, that Inward Light of our Conscience which was kindled in our Soul at our first Creation, and instead of its Divine Instructions teach it new Lessons after the Mysteries of Hell and Iniquity. But these wicked Artifices must be laid aside, and Sincerity, Fidelity and Diligence used in the Examination and Tryal of our Ways, before we can possibly turn to the Lord.

Which is the Second Particular I said was contained in the Prophet's Advice, and for the sake of which Duty the other of *Searching and Trying our Ways* was prescribed: for to search into our wicked Lives, and to call our pass'd Sins to remembrance, if not in order to their Condemnation, and our Returning again to the Lord, must be to applaud them, and to delight our selves in a fanciful re-acting them over again, which is a greater Sin, if it be possible, than the first committing them. And this Duty of *Turning again to the Lord*, is also express'd by a Metaphor, the so common Figure in Scripture, by a Similitude taken from such as go astray, and return again into the Right way: or that fly from their Abode, and upon better thoughts return home again. For there are Wanderers from their Duty, as well as from the Road or High-way; Fugitives from Vertue, as well as from their Houses and Country. *Philo* says of *Adam* and *Eve* flying from God's presence after their Transgression, *Every Sinner is a Fugitive*: and the Psalmist calls those that break the Commandments, *Wanderers out of the Right-way*. God, in the Wisdom of his Counsel, made *Some things without Himself* the Centre or Resting-place of Inferior Creatures, as
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the Air for light Bodies, the Earth for heavy, &c. but he made *Himself* the only Center of Man's happiness, the only Resting-place of his Soul; and when ever Men are intic'd and led away with their Lusts to seek Content in any Worldly or Carnal Enjoyment, as they depart from God and turn their Backs upon him, so they depart from their Peace, and turn their Backs upon their Felicity; and till they follow the Prophet's Advice, *Turn again to the Lord*, they pursue only their Misery.

Now [*the turning*] here spoken of being Figurative; not Corporal, but Spiritual; not local from place to place, but progressive from Vice to Vertue; the plain Importance of *returning to the Lord*, is Repentance, the forsaking our former wicked Courses, and serving God for the future in Holiness of Life. And though the Words comprehend in their full Latitude the Whole Duty of Man, yet they may be reduc'd to these two short Precepts which we find in the fourth Chapter of *S^t James*, ver. 8. — *Cleanse your Hands ye Sinners, and purifie your Hearts ye double-minded.* By our *Hands* the Apostle means our Outward Actions, our Hands being the ordinary Instruments by which they are wrought: and by our *Hearts* he denotes our Inward Affections, because from thence our Affections proceed. Now our Outward Actions must be Just and Honest, because by them our Hearts are only made legible and intelligible to the World: and our Hearts again or Inward Affections must be pure and holy, because otherwise 'tis as impossible that our Actions should be Just and Honest, as that a clear Stream should flow from a troubled and puddled Fountain: besides, God sees the Heart, though Man does not; and East and West will sooner meet, and make one Point

Point in the Compass, than God will close with an Impure or Wicked Person. If we will enjoy an Union with God, we must forsake our Sins, and not expect that he should recede from his Righteousness; we must turn to him, or he will never turn to us: and all our Prosperity and Felicity depend upon our Early and Sincere Turning to the Lord: for as *those that Dye in the Lord, have all Tears wip'd from their Eyes*; so the Living Man that turns to the Lord, shall have all Tears wip'd from his Eyes, as the Prophet implies in my Text, *i. e.* his Complaints for the Punishment of his Sins taken away, nay his Punishment shall be turned into Blessings and Mercies by the God of Mercy. I shall add but a few Words of Application, and conclude.

We see here the highest Encouragement to excite us to Repentance and a Holy Life, no less than the removing all our Complaints, by the removing all our Evils; nay, than by turning our Evils into Blessings. Thanks be to God, we cannot parallel the Evils of our days, with those of the Jewish Nation, which the Prophet here laments; we are not actually reduced again, as some years since, to an *Egyptian* bondage, to work in Brick-kilns, by our bloody and oppressing Dissenting Brethren. Thanks be to God, I say, the Calamity of our *Israel* is not such, that we should take up this Complaint, *How is She become a Widow, She that was Great among the Nations, a Princess among the Provinces, how is She become tributary?* Among antient Roman Medals there is one with a disconsolate Figure, sitting on the Ground, with this Inscription, *Britannia capta, Britain subdu'd*: but I trust to the Divine Goodness, that the like Fate is far from us this day: though we were lately so near being Surpriz'd, and totally destroy'd by the Malice

Malice of our Bloody Enemies, that what one said of a Dog's near seizing the Prey, might be apply'd to us — *similisque tenenti, non tenet*, we were so near being taken, that we were only not taken; and though we were not confounded, we seem'd to be: As might be gathered, as by other Evidences so, from the Letters of our ill-willing Neighbours, who, more solicitous for our Ruine, than charitable to warn us of our Danger, enquired only after the Manner and Measure of our Destruction, but doubted not in the least of the Certainty of it. But though we were Miraculously snatch'd out of the Jaws of Ruine, are we now secure? so that the Reprehension in my Text may be retorted on us, *Wherefore doth a living man complain?* Some forward Heads and Branches of the late Conspiracy, I acknowledge, are cut off, or secured; but the Roots of it are still left in the Ground, and charily preserved and fostered by the Still-Designing Parties, and not a little cherished and assisted by many who pretend to be of a contrary Perswasion. This Age, which despises to go less in a Refined Way of working Mischief than any former whatsoever, has fram'd an Engine, which would be thought to have been filed and polished by the very Hand of Charity, though it was forged in Hell, and that is, To disbelieve all that is said of any Plot and Conspiracy against the King, Church or State; insinuate, nay dare to publish in Print, That the Conspiracy, which makes such a Noise, is indeed only against the Accused Party, either to destroy or to bring it low. Good and Gracious Souls! who can give the Lie to their King and Country to justify Villains; make no scruple to rescue Traitors from the Bar, and to set the Judges in their place; to acquit Schismatics and Regicides, and to arraign the whole Loyalty

Loyalty of the Realm. And with what reason, beside their secret favouring of the Guilty? Forsooth, some of the Condemned Persons denied their Treason to the last Moment of their Life, and expired in Protestation of their Innocence. Their False Principles and Impious Tenets were their Innocence, and the Good Opinion they have of their Wicked Designs is all the Uprightness and Integrity they insist on. *O foolish Galatians!* says *St Paul*, who has bewitched you? when the Christians among them Judaized. And we may say to those that countenance Sectaries and Schismatics among us, *O insensati, O fautores!* O mad and besotted Favourers of your greatest Enemies! who has fascinated, who has bewitched you? Are these indeed those truly Illuminated Persons they pretend to be, and are you your selves those Reprobated People they call you, that you think the Terms easie to involve the Kingdom in Bloud and Ruine to be of their Number? This is no time to convince this Frenzy: but I instance in these Important and even Incumbent Evils to shew we are not without Just Causes of Complaint: and so little does the Nation want Complaints, that Complaints are one of the greatest Grievances we complain of, namely, the Complaints of those who at present have no power to do further Mischief, but with false Surmises and feigned Lamentations endeavour to fill the Unwary with Jealousies and Fears. Against all these Complaints the Prophet's Advice in my Text is a Sure Armour and Defence, If we turn unto the Lord by Repentance and holy Lives, he will turn our Dangers into Security, our Troubles into Peace and Prosperity, *I laid me down and slept*, says the Psalmist, *and rose again, for the Lord sustained me.* If we lye down, and repose our Trust in the Lord in well-

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doing, though there be Trayterous Cabals and Midnight Conspiracies against us, our Sleeps shall be as Safe as Sweet: a false Brother or a Misgiving Conscience, a faint Heart or an Unwary Word let slip, shall betray all: Nay, Means most remote and unlikely, no way relating to the Design on foot, shall overthrow the whole Machination; a casual Fire shall drive the King into his Safety, and leave the Traytors in the Destruction they contrived against him, and the like. If we secure our Duty, God will secure our Peace and Safety. To whom be ascribed all Honour, Glory, &c.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

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